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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 66/NO. 42 NOVEMBER 11, 2002

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D.C. murders: gov't uses military in police operations

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Pa. miners fight cover-up by bosses, gov't on safety

Workers testify on Quecreek mine flooding disaster

BY JEREMY ROSE

SOMERSET, Pennsylvania—Seven of the nine coal miners who were trapped underground in the flooded Quecreek mine here in July are fighting to prevent a cover-up by the bosses and government regulators of the company's responsibility for the disaster.

The workers were trapped for 78 hours when at least 77 million gallons of water rushed into the mine. The flood occurred as the crew was cutting coal with a continuous mining machine and water poured in from the adjacent abandoned Saxman mine, along with trapped mine gases. The miners were found alive after a round-the-clock rescue operation by fellow workers. The nonunion mine was operated by Black Wolf Coal for PBS Coals, the state's largest strip mine operator.

The seven miners are Blaine Mayhugh, Thomas Foy, John Unger, John Phillippi, Robert Pugh, Ron Hileman, and Dennis Hall. Mark Poppernack and Randy Fogel, the foremen, were trapped underground with them. A second nine-man crew was warned in enough time for them to make their way out of the mine through the floodwaters July 24.

Along with their attorney Howard Messer, several of the miners testified Oc-

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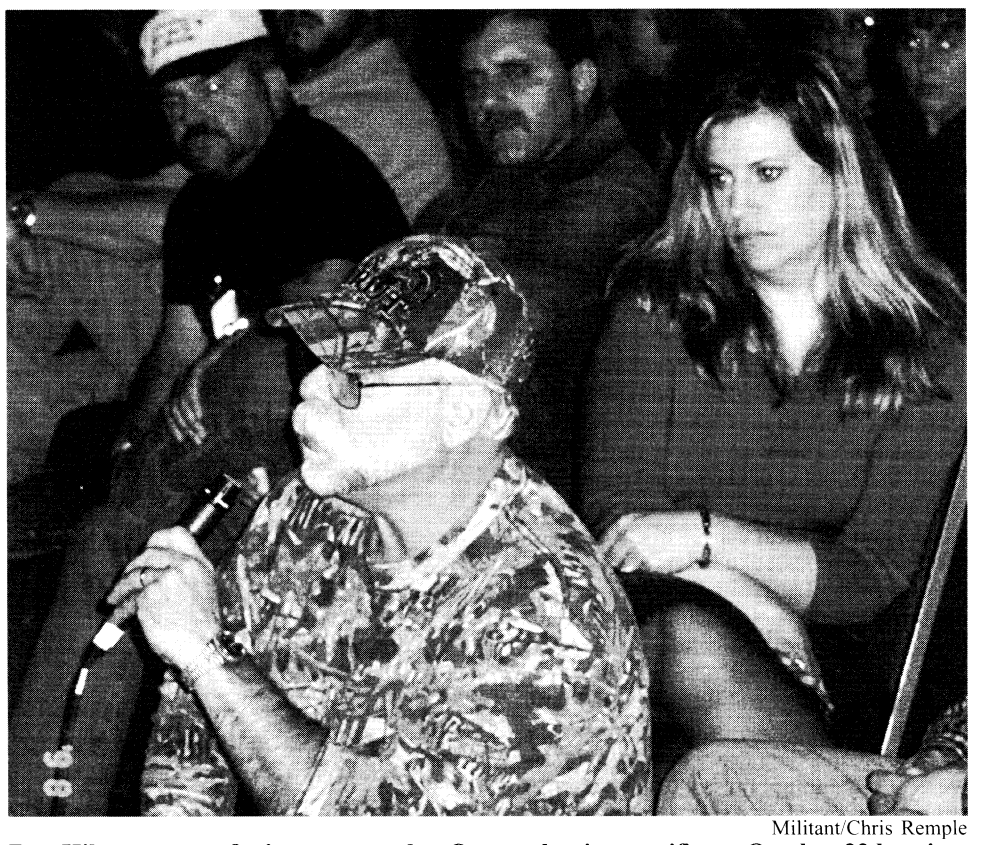

Militant/Chris Remple

Ron Hileman, one of miners trapped at Quecreek mine, testifies at October 22 hearing.

'Cuba and Africa are bound by solidarity'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

WASHINGTON—"When Cuban volunteer soldiers arrived in Angola in 1975, U.S. military advisers were present supporting the South African troops," said Víctor Dreke, speaking to an enthusiastic audience of more than 300 people at Howard University here October 25. "The South Africans had invaded Angola and were already 25 kilometers from Luanda, the capital, when the first Cuban soldiers arrived. The Cuban and Angolan combatants stopped the offensive by the racist South African Army."

At several speaking engagements in this area, Dreke often returned to the decisive weight that 300,000 Cuban soldiers deployed, alongside Angolan and Namibian forces, in repelling assaults by the South African apartheid army over a 13-year period, ending in the defeat of the invaders in the decisive 1988 battle of Cuito Cuanavale. This successful struggle was a benchmark of decades of Cuban internationalist work in Africa, internationalist work that continues to this day through medical and other missions, and that remains an example of the ties of solidarity that bind revolutionary Cuba and Africa.

Dreke spoke from the vantage point of a leading combatant in the Cuban Revolution who for nearly four decades has been centrally involved in Cuba's internationalist solidarity with Africa.

The public meeting at Howard University began in a 156-seat space. The room was quickly packed with people who came to hear Dreke and Ana Morales, a doctor who has helped lead Cuban medical missions in several African countries, speaking on the theme "Cuba and Africa—1959 to

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Militant/Marty Ressler

Víctor Dreke speaks October 23 at University of Maryland in Baltimore.

Mass call-up of U.S. reservists planned for Gulf

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

U.S. officials are planning a call-up of about a quarter-million National Guard and Army Reserve troops, as Washington takes further steps in preparation for a bombing campaign and invasion of Iraq. Their plans call for deploying a similar number as during the 1990–91 Gulf war, when about 265,000 reservists were called into active duty, according to Pentagon officials.

Much of the military equipment needed to carry out a war on Iraq, such as refueling tankers and cargo planes, is in reserve units, noted retired army general Barry McCaffrey. "We can't go to war without the Guard and Reserves," he told the Baltimore *Sun*. "To run a major operation with Iraq, the first thing the president will need is 100,000 troops" from those units. McCaffrey commanded the 24th Mechanized Division, which spearheaded the U.S. ground invasion of Iraq in February 1991.

According to U.S. officials, some reservists will be assigned to combat duty, while others are to be placed on guard duty at U.S. military bases overseas and throughout the United States. Plans are also in the works to station U.S. troops outside factories, at power plants, transportation hubs, and medical centers.

Meanwhile, the Navy is speeding the deployment of aircraft carriers to the Mideast. Two are there now—the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, located in the northern Arabian Sea, and the USS *George Washington* in the Mediterranean Sea. Scheduled to make their way to the area shortly are the USS *Harry Truman* and USS *Nimitz*.

Also preparing for operations off the coast of Iraq is the USS *Constellation.* The aircraft carrier has been in the midst of two weeks of war exercises running through October 30, off San Clemente Island near California. The action involves nearly 9,000 troops and more than 15 ships, with F-14 Tomcats and F/A-18 Hornets being flown off the carrier's deck. At its completion the *Constellation* together with the eight ships in its battle group will be departing for the Middle East.

The big "issue for us right now is getting the heavy equipment over there," a senior Pentagon official told the press. Toward that end, large cargo ships are being loaded in the ports of San Diego and Charleston, South Carolina, to ferry Army and Marine Corps trucks and other military equipment

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CAMPAIGNING FOR COMMUNISM, RESPONDING TO POLITICAL OPENINGS

The struggle against imperialism today

Speakers

Jack Barnes
National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party

Jason Alessio
UMWA miner, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Colorado

Arrin Hawkins
Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor of New York

Mary-Alice Waters
Editor of *New International*

Martín Koppel
Editor of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*

Olympia Newton
Young Socialists National Leadership Council, SWP candidate for California secretary of state

Ma'mud Shirvani Farsi editor, Pathfinder Press

❖ Iraq and the Arabian peninsula: Washington's drive to dominate the region and control world oil ❖ The unfolding world depression ❖ U.S. labor and imperialist decay

Frank Altschul Auditorium, 4th Floor, 420 W. 118th St. at Amsterdam Ave. (on the Columbia University campus)

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‘Cuba and Africa bound by solidarity’

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the present.”

Twenty minutes into the event, well over 100 more had filled the hallway outside, unable to get in. A larger space was found on the second floor, where another event was just finishing. With several participants helping to rapidly clean the room so the meeting could be held there, the audience moved to the new space and continued.

The chair of the meeting was Lorenzo Morris, head of the political science department. He was introduced by Shawntel Hebert, the head of Amnesty International at Howard and one of the students who had worked for months to build the event. The political science and history departments both endorsed the meeting and, along with the English department, hosted a reception for the two visiting Cubans beforehand. Sponsoring student organizations included the Howard University NAACP chapter, Howard Student Government, Amnesty International, and Afro-Latinos Making Alliances (ALMA).

Decades of revolutionary activity

The crowd reflected the broad support and interest that the Cuban speakers drew, especially among Blacks and Africans. A number of other groups involved in Cuba solidarity activities helped publicize the meeting, drawing people from all over the city.

Many in the audience were eager to hear about Víctor Dreke’s experiences in the Cuban revolutionary movement. In the early 1950s as a teenager in central Cuba, Dreke joined in the popular struggle against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Joining the Rebel Army in the mid-1950s, Dreke achieved the rank of captain by the time of the revolution’s triumph in 1959. Following the victory of the revolution he held a number of responsibilities, including as one of the commanders of the forces combating counterrevolutionary guerrilla bands, which murdered hundreds of peasants and workers during a U.S.-organized dirty war centered in Cuba’s Escambray mountains from 1959 to 1965.

In 1965 Dreke served as second in command under Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara in an internationalist combat mission by 128 Cuban volunteers in the Congo. In 1965 Cuba was responding to a request for assistance from leaders of the national liberation movement there who were followers of Patrice Lumumba, the assassinated leader of the Congolese independence struggle. Dreke returned to Africa in 1966-1968 as the head of Cuba’s military mission to Guinea-Bissau, where Cuban forces trained soldiers loyal to Amilcar Cabral, the main leader of that country’s struggle for independence from Portuguese colonial rule. In the last decade he has helped lead Cuba’s work assisting African development projects, and has been a leader of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

‘Capitalists will not take back power’

At the Howard University meeting, Dreke gave a brief presentation, as did Morales. Then the question and answer period lasted for more than two hours.

One questioner asked Dreke where he saw Cuba going 40 years from today. Dreke replied, “I can tell you what we won’t do in Cuba 40 years from now. The capitalists will not take power and we will never put the rope back up that divided Blacks and whites in Cuba. That I can guarantee.” In his book, *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, published by Pathfinder, Dreke describes how after the victory of the Cuban Revolution, in the town of Cruces, an officer of the Rebel Army that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship removed the rope that had separated Blacks and whites at dances in the park—an act that was repeated in towns across Cuba.

Answering a question by an African student who asked whether Cuba will continue to offer revolutionary solidarity to Africa after Fidel Castro dies, Dreke emphasized the leadership responsibilities already shouldered by a new generation in Cuba. “Many leaders in Cuba today are young people who weren’t old enough to be part of the armed struggle against Batista,” he said.

One example he gave was of the five Cuban revolutionaries—today locked up in U.S. prisons on frame-up spying and conspiracy charges because they were gathering information on Florida-based counterrevolutionary groups engaged in assaults on Cuba.

Militant/Marty Ressler

Above, Víctor Dreke, with translator Barry Fatland and Ana Morales, addresses students and others at University of Maryland meeting (right).

“We have five young Cuban patriots imprisoned here in the United States who are not old enough to have fought in the revolution. They have been imprisoned for defending Cuba against terrorism that was being prepared by groups in the United States against Cuba,” Dreke said.

“The U.S government has refused to allow their families to see some of them,” he added. “They have dispersed them to five different prisons. They thought those conditions would crush them, but instead they have spread the struggle to five different places.” Dreke urged those who attended each meeting to get involved in the fight to free them.

During the discussion period, Ana Morales replied to a number of questions on health care in Cuba, which, because there was a socialist revolution, is no longer a commodity as it is in capitalist countries. She outlined measures Cuba has been able

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Cuba and Africa: 1959 to Today

Víctor Dreke and Ana Morales, two veteran Cuban revolutionaries, have begun a tour of six U.S. cities to speak about the Cuban Revolution and its record of support for liberation struggles in Africa. Below is the schedule for the next stops of the tour. The series of speaking engagements is hosted by the Africa-Cuba Speakers Committee.

Birmingham, Alabama

November 5
10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Visit to Birmingham Civil Rights Instituite
2:30–3:30 p.m. Reception at Miles College in Fairfield

November 6
10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Visit to Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Epes, Alabama
Meeting and lunch with Black farmers
3:00–6:00 p.m. Visit to UA Tuscaloosa

November 7
Morning: visit to Birmingham Southern College
Lunchtime, early afternoon: Visit to UAB School of Nursing, School of Public Health (Morales)
Noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch, African American Studies Students (Dreke)
6:00 p.m. UAB Citywide meeting at Ryals Public Health Building Auditorium (Room 407)
1665 University Blvd. (between 16th and 17th Streets)

Tampa, Florida

November 11
Meeting with farmers

November 12
University of South Florida

Boston, Massachusetts

November 14–15

For more information or to send a contribution to help defray travel expenses, contact the Africa-Cuba Speakers Committee; c/o Howard University NAACP, 2400 6th St., Suite 118, Washington, D.C. 20059. For local information on Birmingham tour, call Lynda Harrison (205) 934-6787 or Susan LaMont (205) 923-5010 or Niyi Coker (205) 975-9652.

THE MILITANT

Dockworkers stand up to shipping bosses

More than 10,000 West Coast dockworkers are resisting government and the port bosses’ pressure to speed up production and accept unsafe working conditions. The ‘Militant’ champions this struggle and those of other workers and farmers in the United States and around the world.

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Cops, military use sniper case to assault rights

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The search for a gunman involved in the killings of a number of people in Washington, D.C., and surrounding areas—a dragnet that ended with the arrests of two men on October 24—unleashed a massive deployment of federal, state, and local police. Cops threw up roadblocks on major highways, stopped motorists for interrogation, and conducted vehicle searches in spite of Fourth Amendment protection against arbitrary search and seizure.

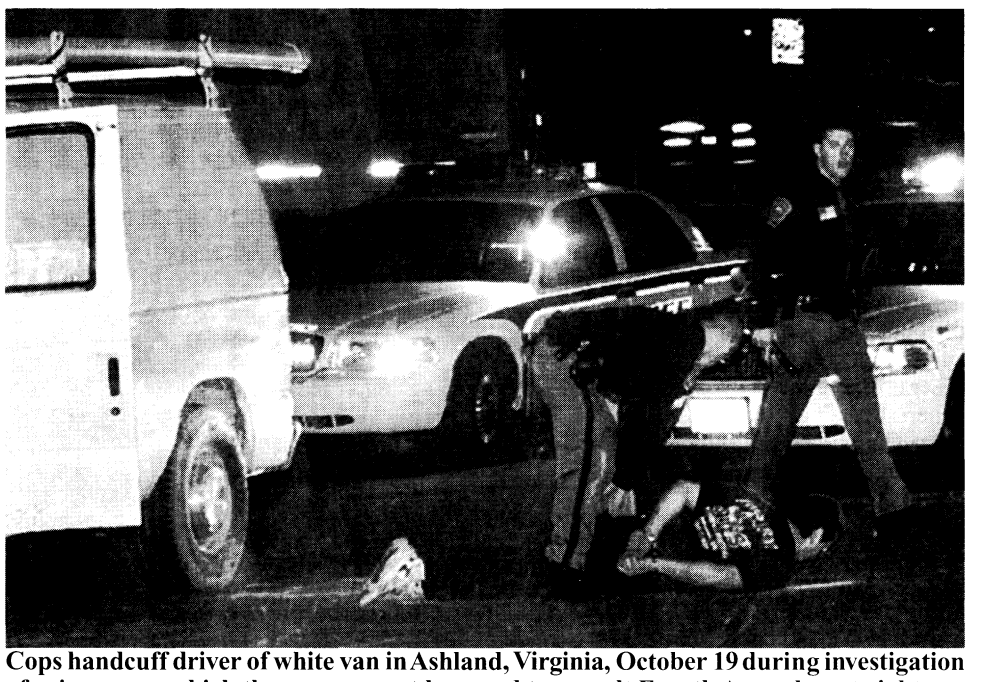
The U.S. military were also introduced into the operation, deploying surveillance aircraft in Washington skies around the clock. The Montgomery Council cops and the FBI requested the military assistance as a way of getting around the provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act, which bars the armed forces from participating in domestic police matters.

Two days before the arrests, cops in Maryland's Montgomery County sealed off major sections of the Capital Beltway during the morning rush hour. Tens of thousands of people were stalled in traffic for hours, including children stuck on school buses. Idling cars ran out of gas and workers were hours late for their jobs.

This was the fifth time in two weeks that police had blocked major thoroughfares in the area. At some of the checkpoints cops with guns drawn stopped virtually every vehicle, while at others they halted only those driven by men. Many drivers were ordered at gunpoint to open their trunks. The traffic snarls were made worse after a number of radio and TV stations agreed to police requests not to broadcast the location of checkpoints or suggest other travel routes.

In addition to local and state police departments, more than 1,500 police from federal agencies joined this operation. They included 600 or more from each of the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), 100 from the U.S. Marshals Service, 70 from the Drug Enforcement Administration, and 50 from the Secret Service. The CIA also participated in the manhunt, deploying agents with bomb-sniffing dogs for use at traffic stops.

According to media reports, the ATF arrested a number of individuals it claimed possessed guns illegally, although none of them were suspected of having any connection to the killings. At the initial roadblocks, police stopped anyone driving a white van in the area from Washington, D.C. to as far north as Ashland, Virginia, more than 90 miles away. In some cases, drivers were pulled out of their vehicles, handcuffed, and interrogated. The focus on white vans was later dropped.



Cops handcuff driver of white van in Ashland, Virginia, October 19 during investigation of sniper case, which the government has used to assault Fourth Amendment rights.

Ken Willis, the executive director of the Virginia chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said that while police can pull cars over under current laws, they are not supposed to conduct searches unless they first get the drivers' permission.

On October 24 police in Maryland arrested John Allen Muhammad, 41, and John Lee Malvo, 17, and charged them with six "sniper" slayings in Montgomery County. Both face prosecution for other deaths in Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Alabama.

Federal officials and authorities in all areas except Washington immediately said that they would aim for the death penalty for Muhammad. Laws in Maryland and at the federal level would forbid the execution of Malvo, but Virginia and Alabama allow the death penalty for people of 16 years of age. Police interrogators are reportedly pressing Malvo to testify against the older man, who is being held in a maximum security prison in Baltimore.

"The overriding concern among federal officials is to ensure their legal options include the death penalty," reported the Associated Press.

Government officials have also attempted to link the case and their massive manhunt with the "war on terror." The October 26 *New York Times* reported that "law enforcement officials" said that "they are trying to determine whether anti-American attitudes, inspired by last year's attacks on September 11, may have played a part in the shootings."

In another development, the CIA announced an expansion of its operations within the United States, placing agents with nearly all of the FBI's 56 terrorism task forces in cities across the country. In the mid-1980s the agency maintained nearly 35 domestic field stations, but the number was reduced over the ensuing decade. Since September 11, 2001, the CIA has been reopening its domestic offices, bringing the number currently in operation close to 30.

Pentagon tested chemical weapons on Vieques

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Washington's admission that it tested chemical weapons on Vieques has fueled the ongoing demands that the U.S. Navy end its bombing exercises on this Puerto Rican island. After complaints of ill health from 55 veterans, the Pentagon on October 9 lifted the lid on decades of Navy contamination of the land and water of Vieques.

The U.S. Department of Defense released summaries on 28 cases, involving 5,500 soldiers, in which it carried out chemical weapons testing in the 1960s over several U.S. states, including Alaska, Florida, and Hawaii, as well as sites in the United Kingdom and the Marshall Islands, at the time a U.S. colony.

The military brass also acknowledged that in May 1969 Marine jets sprayed trioctyl phosphate (TOF)—a chemical simulating the nerve gas VX—on Marine units that were practicing an amphibious assault on Vieques and on a base ship. TOF can harm the skin, eyes, and respiratory system, and is known to cause cancer in animals. In disregard for the health of the soldiers and residents of Vieques, the jets sprayed the TOF over land and water in order to assess how Marines operated in chemical protective gear and how effective chemical weapons would be. Because Washington carried out the experiments outdoors, Vieques civilians were also exposed to chemical and biological agents.

Since World War II, when the U.S. government established a Navy bombing range on the small eastern island of Vieques in Puerto Rico—its main colony in the Caribbean--fishermen and other local residents have protested the infringement of the U.S. military on their land. They have opposed Washington's use of Vieques as a training ground for invasions or assaults on other countries—from Grenada and Nicaragua to Yugoslavia and now Iraq. In addition, the repeated bombings, as well as the storage of hazardous materials, have had a devastating effect on the residents' livelihoods and health.

Pentagon admissions of chemical weapons testing "bolsters what we've said, that the health of Vieques residents has been threatened by the Navy," said Ismael Guadalupe of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques (CRDV). For example, the cancer rate in Vieques is twice that of the rest of Puerto Rico. At an October 23 press conference in Washington, a CRDV delegation explained its demands for the 'four Ds': demilitarization, decontamination, devolution (return of the lands), and sustainable development. "For us nothing has changed," Guadalupe said, in the continuing "struggle to gain ownership of our land."

Rafael Rivera Castaño, an epidemiologist from Vieques who attended the news conference, added that Puerto Rican governor Sila Calderón's study of the high cancer rate in Vieques and the use of chemical weapons in military maneuvers must include the participation of the local residents in order to disclose the full truth.

The Vieques-based committee has called on Washington to release all information

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Nurses in California fight to improve pensions

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

LONG BEACH, California—Chanting, "What's Disgusting? Union Busting" and "What's Outrageous? Unfair Wages," hundreds of union nurses walked the picket lines and held two rallies here October 23.

The 1,300 registered nurses, members of the California Nurses Association, work at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, the second largest private hospital in Los Angeles County. Earlier in October, despite an aggressive "no" vote campaign by the hospital bosses, the nurses voted 714 to 277 to approve calling a one-day strike.

The hospital administration responded by locking the nurses out. Long Beach Memorial is spending between $1 million and $2 million to hire replacement workers from the scab outfit U.S. Nursing Corp. Hospital officials have said that they plan to extend the lockout for four days.

When about 75 nurses marched into work after the strike, chanting "We Want to Work! We Want to Work," they were met by a phalanx of Premium Personnel security guards hired by the hospital. Camera crews were told to leave because they were not allowed on "private property."

Nurse demand decent pension plan

Nurses on the picket lines say the main issue in the strike is a decent pension plan. The current plan is similar to many 401(k) plans. Called 403b, nurses can contribute between 2 percent and 12 percent of their income to a retirement fund, which includes more than a dozen funds to invest in. In turn, the hospital is supposed to contribute between 3 percent and 7 percent annually, but recently the hospital is only putting in 1 percent. One striking nurse called this plan "morally repugnant."

The nurses are demanding a defined benefit plan that provides guaranteed pension payments. "Right now nurses are losing bundles of money due to the stock market collapse. It's really sad when you give 30 years to an institution and lose everything," said Mary Bailey, who has worked at the hospital for 15 years.

Nurses are also concerned about the "efficiency" drive, which is integral to the cost-cutting component of the hospital's retirement program. "That shouldn't play a part in patient care," said Bailey, who equated this provision to ambulance companies asking what insurance the patient carries. "I say I don't do insurance, I do needle shots and tubes. I'm not in nursing to know if a patient pays cash or what their insurance is, it doesn't matter to me... I take care of all the patients the same," she stated.

After several organizing efforts and union representation votes spanning two decades, according to one veteran nurse, the nurses voted in the union last November by a vote of 630 to 523. Shirley Harraldson, an RN (registered nurse) with 40 years experience, mostly in surgery, said that she was never big on unions. "I've never been for them until now," she said. "The hospital doesn't care about patient care, all they care about is making money. They spent millions fighting the union." The week before the strike Harraldson had been suspended for "pushing" and "harassing" a replacement nurse.

Because of a national nursing shortage, nurses are forced to care for more and more patients to the point that many are quitting their jobs. The turnover rate at Long Beach Memorial is high. Some 47 percent of the nurses have been there less than five years.

"This is pushing and pushing and making people work harder. We have to put our foot down and say this is what it takes to take care of patients the right way," stated Margie Keenen. A letter from a nurse in the October 24 *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, noted that "nurses do not get lunches or breaks and are not paid for that time."

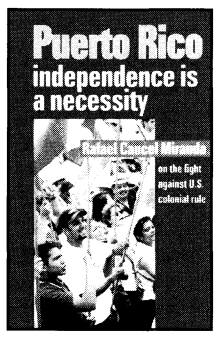
The lockout at the hospital is the latest example of increasing labor resistance at hospitals in southern California. The Health Care Workers Alliance is organizing the "ancillary" workers at Long Beach Memorial Hospital, which including cleaners, janitors, attendants, various technicians, and other health-care workers. Many of them walked the picket lines in a show of support.

In December 1,700 registered nurses at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, the largest nonprofit hospital on the West Coast, will vote on whether to join the California Nurses Association. Providence St. Joseph Medical Center and Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center are both challenging union election results. Nurses voted at both institutions to join the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) this year.

Nurses at Queens of Angels/Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center, represented by the SEIU, held two strikes and a rally earlier this year. They won a contract in August.

A number of nurses at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center made parallels between the hospital lockout and the recent 10-day lockout by the Pacific Maritime Association against the dockworkers. They were especially glad to have members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), as well as many other unionists, coming out to support their fight. "It's a shame Taft-Hartley is being used against the dockworkers," said nurse Deann McEwan. "Still, the ILWU remains strong and has always been a source of strength for us. Together we will stand together and fight for our rights."

From Pathfinder



Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda

In two interviews, Cancel Miranda — one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979 — speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the campaign needed to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners, the example of Cuba's socialist revolution, and the resurgence of the independence movement today. In English and Spanish. Booklet $3

See page 14 for list of distributors

'We have as little faith in Kennedy's words as we have fear of his threats'

In October 1962, in what is widely known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Washington pushed the world to the brink of nuclear war. The events brought to a head the drive by the U.S. rulers to launch a direct invasion of Cuba and overthrow the revolutionary government there. In the face of the U.S. government's threats, Cuban working people mobilized in their millions to defend their revolution, staying Washington's hand (see accompanying box).

Released on the 40th anniversary of these events, the Pathfinder book *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba,* by Cuban author Tomás Diez Acosta, tells the story of what really happened.

The *Militant* has been printing excerpts from the new book. This one, our final installment, is the text of a statement issued Nov. 25, 1962, by the National Directorate of the Integrated Organizations and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba in response to new threats against Cuba made by President John F. Kennedy in a November 20 press conference in Washington. The statement points out that while Kennedy announced the lifting of the blockade of Cuba, the U.S. president's statement "contain[s] the seeds of a provocative and aggressive policy against our country."

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The National Directorate of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations and the Council of Ministers, meeting in joint session to take up questions relating to the so-called Caribbean Crisis, hereby resolve to make known to the people of Cuba and the world the position of our party and the Cuban government.

In his latest public statement, President Kennedy announced the lifting of the blockade of Cuba in return for the withdrawal by the Soviet Union of the intermediate-range ballistic missiles and IL-28 medium-range bombers stationed in Cuba. Nevertheless, the statements by the president of the United States contain the seeds of a provocative and aggressive policy against our country, which must be denounced.

In one part of his speech, President Kennedy said: "As for our part, if all offensive weapons systems are removed from Cuba and kept out of the Hemisphere in the future, under adequate verification and safeguards, and if Cuba is not used for the export of aggressive Communist purposes, there will be peace in the Caribbean. And as I said in September, 'We shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this hemisphere.' We will not, of course, abandon the political, economic, and other efforts of this Hemisphere to halt subversion from Cuba, nor our purpose and hope that the Cuban people shall some day be truly free. But these policies are very different from any intent to launch a military invasion of the island."

The position of force adopted by the U.S. government is wholly contrary to international legal norms. Above and beyond the outrages it has committed against Cuba, and that brought the world to the brink of war—an outcome avoided by means of agreements based on a commitment by the United States to abandon its aggressive and criminal policy against Cuba—it refuses even to give assurances that it will not again violate the United Nations Charter and international law by invading the Republic of Cuba, on the pretext that our country has not agreed to international inspection.

It is completely clear that Cuba has a sovereign right, based on the United Nations Charter, to agree or not to agree to inspection of its territory. Cuba has never offered or agreed to such verification.

The Soviet government, for its part, complied with the verification requirement it spoke about in its letter of October 28, by allowing the United States to verify on the high seas the withdrawal of the missiles. The United States agreed to this form of verification.

Bohemia

Noted poet Manuel Navarro recites poetry to Cuban combatants mobilized during October 1962 "missile" crisis. Washington was preparing to launch war on the Cuban people to try to crush the workers and farmers government, which offered an example to working people throughout the Americas and the world. "To their aggression, we shall respond with our determination to fight to the last combatant," said statement by Cuban revolutionary leadership in response to new threats by U.S. president Kennedy.

Policy of aggression against Cuba

President Kennedy's claim is groundless. It is merely a pretext for not carrying out his part of the agreement and for persisting in his policy of aggression against Cuba. As if that were not enough, even if permission were given for inspection, carrying with it all the guarantees that the U.S. government might see fit to demand, the peace of the Caribbean would still be subject to the condition that Cuba not be used for "the export of aggressive Communist purposes."

What this means is that any effort by the peoples of Latin America to free themselves from the imperialist yoke could serve as a pretext for the U.S. government to accuse Cuba of breaking the peace, and then to attack our country. Flimsier guarantees would be difficult to imagine.

To all this must be added one additional fact that speaks to the warmongering and domineering policy of the U.S. government. In his latest statement, President Kennedy tacitly reasserted the "right"—already claimed on several other occasions—for spy planes to fly over the territory of Cuba and photograph it from coast to coast. This too is a gross violation of international law.

Respect for international law is an essential condition if the nations of the world are to live together regardless of their social or economic systems. The only effective guarantee that the rule of law will be maintained in international affairs and that the provisions of the law will be complied with is for all nations to respect established norms. At this moment of sharp rivalry between two conceptions of society, the United States has arrogated to itself the right to violate existing international norms and to establish new formulas as it pleases.

It is our view that when such a dangerous situation is reached, when one country decides, by and for itself, how law is to be applied in its relations with other countries, there is no choice but to firmly resist its claims.

The United States is trying to dictate what kind of arms we should or should not have. The U.S. rulers, who compel us to expend enormous resources in order to defend ourselves against the aggression to which we have been subjected during the four years of our revolution's development, also claim to be the judges of what the limit should be on the armaments with which we defend our freedom.

It was the U.S. government that, by its repeated and overt attacks on our country, made it necessary for the Cuban people to arm themselves. It was President Kennedy himself who ordered an army of mercenaries to land at Playa Girón. It was under his administration that thousands upon thousands of U.S. weapons were dropped on our country by parachute or unloaded by sea with the aim of encouraging and organizing bands of counterrevolutionaries, who committed the worst possible crimes against teachers, literacy volunteers, peasants, and workers.

The government of the United States—both the previous and present administrations—not only adopted criminal economic measures against Cuba, which confronted our people with harsh problems; in addition, their acts of military aggression forced us to devote great energies and resources to defense of our integrity. What would have become of our country and its revolution had our people not offered stubborn and heroic resistance to the actions of that powerful and aggressive country? The United States is guilty of a policy of economic strangulation and of violence against Cuba, a policy that has led to the Caribbean Crisis with all its consequences and dangers.

Furthermore, the United States violated the principle of freedom of the seas by establishing a blockade of Cuba; it violated the United Nations Charter by adopting unilateral measures against our country; and it now takes refuge in the Organization of American States, seeking official sanction for its acts of air piracy. The OAS expelled us from its ranks; it declared us to be outside Latin America. But the OAS has no jurisdiction whatsoever on our soil; its decisions have no validity for us; to cite them is arbitrary—it is pure sophistry on the part of the imperialist aggressor.

The U.S. government has reiterated its interventionist aims. It has stated that under no circumstances will it abandon its political, economic, "and other" acts of aggression. What is meant by "other" efforts against Cuba? Internal subversion? Sabotage? Acts of terrorism? Pirate raids? Infiltration by CIA agents? The landing and dropping of weapons in our territory? Invasions by mercenaries? All these things, in Pentagon jargon, are termed "paramilitary warfare."

If that is how matters stand, Cuba will have to defend itself by every available means. It reserves the right to acquire weapons, of whatever type, for its defense and will take such steps as it deems appropriate to strengthen its security in the face of this open threat.

After examining President Kennedy's statement, then, it can be said that armed conflict has been averted but peace has not been achieved.

For our people there has been no peace,

Continued on Page 12

Background to 1962 'missile' crisis in Cuba

After Cuban workers and farmers overthrew a U.S.-backed dictatorship and began a deep-going revolution in 1959, Washington took increasingly aggressive actions to try to overthrow the new revolutionary power. In April 1961, Cuba's revolutionary militias and armed forces crushed a U.S.-organized mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

In the spring and summer of 1962, in face of escalating preparations by Washington for a full-scale invasion of Cuba, the revolutionary government signed a mutual defense pact with the Soviet Union. In October U.S. president John Kennedy demanded removal of Soviet nuclear missiles installed on the island. Washington imposed a naval blockade of Cuba, stepped up preparations for an armed assault, and placed its armed forces on nuclear alert.

In face of the mobilization of Cuban workers and farmers to defend their national sovereignty and revolutionary gains, the U.S. government backed off its invasion plans. Following an exchange of communications between Washington and Moscow, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, without consulting Cuba, announced his decision to remove the missiles on October 28.

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October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba

By Tomás Diez Acosta

"We possess moral long-range missiles that cannot be dismantled and will never be dismantled. This is our strongest strategic weapon."

Fidel Castro, November 1, 1962

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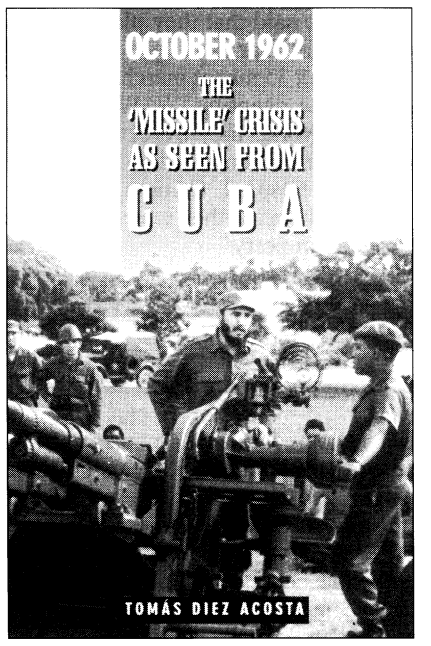


Sales drive gets boost at meetings of Cuban revolutionaries on tour

BY JACK WILLEY

Militant and *Perspectiva Mundial* campaigners ended the strongest week of sales yet in the fall subscription drive. They sold the socialist press, as well as copies of *New International* and *Capitalism's World Disorder*, to coal and copper miners in the West, longshore workers, and participants in demonstrations opposing the Bush administration's policy toward Iraq.

Among those interested in a revolutionary perspective were some of the students who came to hear two Cuban revolutionaries, Commander Víctor Dreke and Ana Morales, a doctor who worked in Africa, speak in Washington, on "Cuba and Africa: 1959 to Today." At the University of Maryland in Baltimore County, students picked up six subscriptions to the socialist press and $250 in Pathfinder literature.

Thirty people bought Pathfinder's *From the Escambray to the Congo* by Dreke at the October 25 meeting at Howard University. One Puerto Rican independence supporter said, "You read about Che [Guevara], but when you meet someone like Víctor Dreke it shows you that Che was not alone."

A group of eight students at American University who came before the meeting to be part of its defense, stuck around for awhile afterward and purchased a number of books on revolutionary politics.

Through the Washington leg of the Africa-Cuba tour, seven people bought copies of *New International* and *Capitalism's World Disorder* and 56 picked up *From the Escambray to the Congo.* All told, $1,500 in revolutionary literature was sold.

Sales to coal and copper miners in West

Supporters of the socialist press from Western Colorado, New Mexico, and California sold three subscriptions to the *Militant,* 57 copies of the paper, and $187 in Pathfinder books in four days in New Mexico.

The team sold a subscription and 39 copies of the *Militant* in front of Pittsburg & Midway's McKinley Mine on the Navajo Nation. Workers who stopped were particularly interested in the coverage on the truth about U.S. imperialism's steps toward war against Iraq and on the brewing battle between workers and the company at the Kennecott Utah Copper mine. Several miners said that they had worked at other mines owned by Kennecott and were not surprised by the bosses' attempt to deal blows to the unions there.

A few days later, two *Militant* supporters from Western Colorado attended a public meeting for Fernando Bielsa Garcia, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington. The meeting, held at Highlands College in Las Vegas, New Mexico, was attended by 60 people from the area. Four bought copies of *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba.*

On October 26, Jason Alessio, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Colorado, campaigned with supporters at a demonstration of 300 people in Salt Lake City, Utah, opposed to the Bush ad-ministration's Mideast policies. The table was busy throughout the day, and turned into a center of debate over how to effectively fight against imperialism. More than $100 in Pathfinder literature was sold, including two copies of *New International* no. 7 with the lead article titled "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," and two copies of *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba.*

Later in the day Alessio and a campaign supporter sold 17 copies of the *Militant* at the Kennecott mine.

On the West Coast, longshore workers are in the midst of a government-imposed "cooling off" period in their fight against the shippers' attempts to slash jobs, weaken safety, and roll back union control over jobs. In the last three weeks, *Militant* supporters in Seattle sold 76 copies of the paper to dockworkers in the area. One worker who had purchased the paper before said he appreciated that "it was very informative. I didn't know they were already bombing Iraq," he noted. Dozens of other papers have been sold on the docks in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Long Beach and Los Angeles area.

On October 26, socialists set up tables with communist literature at several demonstrations opposing the White House's foreign policy in the Mideast. They met many demonstrators looking for a deeper understanding of Washington's war moves in the Middle East and Far East. At the protest in Washington, socialists sold 28 subscriptions to the *Militant* and more than 250 copies of the paper, as well as 31 copies of *New International* and *Capitalism's World Disorder.* In San Francisco, socialist campaigners of Nan Bailey for governor and William Kalman for lieutenant governor of California sold another six subscriptions and 70 copies of the *Militant*. More than $1,500 in Pathfinder literature was sold at the various protests that day.

Militant/Marty Ressler

Students at University of Maryland check out Pathfinder titles at meeting of Cuban revolutionaries Víctor Dreke and Ana Morales. Sales of revolutionary literature were brisk with some $1,500 in Pathfinder literature sold at three Washington area events.

Pentagon tested chemical weapons on Vieques

Continued from Page 3

related to military use of chemicals and toxins on the island. Earlier protests forced a Navy admission that it had fired 263 depleted uranium shells in Vieques in March 1999, and 1,520 uranium shells in Torii Shima, an uninhabited island off the coast of Okinawa, in 1996. The Navy calls these all "accidents."

In the past three years in particular, demonstrations and other protests have taken place both in Puerto Rico and in several U.S. cities against the bombing exercises. Up to 1,500 protesters have been arrested for "trespassing" and on other charges related to mass civil disobedience to protest the U.S. military's use of the island. Four more protesters were sentenced October 21 to terms from 10 days to four months probation.

Calderón, who faces mounting pressure to make good on her pledge to end the bombing exercises on Vieques, announced October 18 that she had received an official letter confirming that the U.S. Navy would withdraw from the island by May 2003. That date had been set in 1999, at a time of massive protests demanding Navy withdrawal from Vieques, in an agreement between then-president William Clinton and the colonial governor at the time, Pedro Rosselló.

Calderón, however, has refused to make public the content of the letter from Secretary of the Navy Gordon England, and England's spokesperson subsequently stated that the letter is not a "guarantee" that the Navy will leave the island.

Earlier, Admiral Robert Natter, commander of the Atlantic Fleet, said the Navy is considering various alternatives to Vieques for military training and maneuvers, and pointed to possible sites in Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina.

Until recently, U.S. Navy officials, joined by a number of capitalist politicians, had insisted that Washington continue its war training on Vieques, calling the island and surrounding waters "irreplaceable."

Ismael Guadalupe of the CRDV, while calling Calderón's announcement positive news, pointed to Washington's decades-long history of lying to the people of Puerto Rico. "We're fed up with the lies," he said, and "we are not going to stop the fight."

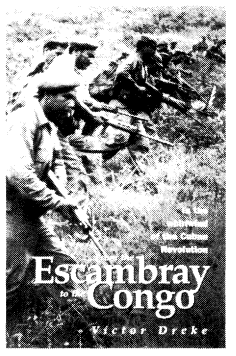
Guadalupe added that the withdrawal of the Navy is only the first battle to be waged, and that a victory in this fight will be won only with the U.S. government taking responsibility for cleaning and decontaminating the lands bombed and occupied for six decades by the Navy.

"The Navy has a history of not cleaning the lands it has occupied," Guadalupe explained. "We are going to demand participation in this process because we don't want what happened in Culebra," referring to a nearby island that, decades after the U.S. Navy was forced to stop its bombing exercises there, has not been decontaminated.

FROM *Pathfinder*

From the Escambray to the Congo

IN THE WHIRLWIND OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION



In his account of how easy it became after the 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution to "take down the rope" that for decades had segregated blacks from whites at dances in town squares, yet how enormous was the battle to transform the social relations underlying this and all the other "ropes" inherited from colonialism, capitalism, and Yankee domination, Víctor Dreke captures the historical challenge of our epoch.

At the heart of this book lies the willingness, determination, and creative joy with which Cuba's working people have, for more than forty years, defended their revolutionary course against the imperialist bastion to the north. **In English and Spanish, $17.00**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 14

AMIEU-Australasian Meat Industry Employee's Union; MWU-Meat Workers Union; NDU-National Distribution Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; UNITE-Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. MUA-Maritime Union of Australia

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive Sept. 7–Nov. 17: Week 7

	Militant			PM		Book	
Country	**Goal**	**Sold**	**%**	**Goal**	**Sold**	**Goal**	**Sold**
Australia	28	18	64%	6	0	15	10
Canada							
Vancouver	**30**	**24**	**80%**	**5**	**4**	**15**	**10**
Toronto	**30**	**23**	**77%**	**5**	**2**	**25**	**5**
Montreal	15	7	47%	10	3	20	13
Canada total	**75**	**54**	**72%**	**20**	**9**	**60**	**28**
Iceland*	**15**	**13**	**87%**	**1**	**1**	**25**	**9**
New Zealand							
Christchurch	**12**	**10**	**83%**	**1**	**0**	**7**	**6**
Auckland	20	13	65%	1	0	7	7
N.Z. total	32	20	63%	2	0	14	13
Sweden							
Stockholm	**12**	**12**	**100%**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**8**
Gothenburg	15	9	60%	3	2	10	8
Sweden Total	**27**	**21**	**78%**	**6**	**5**	**15**	**16**
United Kingdom							
London	45	25	56%	15	9	60	50
Dundee	10	4	40%	0	0	8	13
UK total	55	29	53%	15	9	68	63
United States							
Washington	**30**	**32**	**107%**	**12**	**12**	**25**	**22**
San Francisco	**30**	**31**	**103%**	**20**	**24**	**30**	**28**
Seattle	**40**	**38**	**95%**	**12**	**5**	**30**	**14**
Des Moines	**30**	**27**	**90%**	**15**	**14**	**18**	**17**
Twin Cities	**55**	**47**	**85%**	**45**	**35**	**35**	**25**
Tucson	**5**	**4**	**80%**	**1**	**3**	**5**	**0**
Western Colorado	**30**	**22**	**73%**	**10**	**6**	**12**	**13**
Omaha*	**15**	**11**	**73%**	**23**	**24**	**20**	**22**
Detroit	**43**	**31**	**72%**	**12**	**10**	**25**	**15**
Houston	**35**	**25**	**71%**	**15**	**3**	**30**	**18**
Upper Manhattan	**75**	**53**	**71%**	**45**	**25**	**50**	**37**
Cleveland	28	19	68%	7	8	15	11
NE Pennsylvania	30	20	67%	7	2	15	10
Charlotte	20	13	65%	8	9	20	18
Philadelphia	25	16	64%	10	4	15	10
Atlanta	35	22	63%	15	3	25	8
Chicago	45	27	60%	30	27	25	24
NY Garment Dist.	80	48	60%	45	23	70	20
Los Angeles	45	26	58%	30	18	30	7
Newark	65	37	57%	40	21	35	31
Tampa	25	13	52%	8	1	12	2
Pittsburgh	40	20	50%	4	0	15	9
Brownsville	8	4	50%	2	2	6	3
Boston	28	13	46%	20	7	45	31
Birmingham	22	10	45%	10	8	12	4
Miami	30	11	37%	10	3	25	7
U.S. total	914	620	68%	456	297	645	406
Int'l totals	**1146**	**775**	**70%**	**506**	**321**	**842**	**545**
Goal/Should be	**1100**	**770**	**70%**	**500**	**350**	**725**	**508**

IN THE UNIONS

	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Australia							
AMIEU	4	2	50%			2	0
MUA	3	0	0%			3	
Total	7	2	29%			5	
Canada							
UFCW	9	0	0%	1	1	8	1
UNITE	6	2	33%	7	2	7	2
Total	15	2	13%	8	3	15	3
New Zealand							
MWU	3	1	33%			1	0
NDU	2	0	0%			1	0
Total	5	1	20%			2	0
United States							
UFCW	50	25	50%	65	55	60	24
UMWA	25	6	24%	4	0	13	2
UNITE	50	10	20%	40	14	60	18
Total raised goal*	125	41	33%	109	69	133	44

Miners fight cover-up by coal bosses, gov't

Continued from front page

tober 21 at a hearing in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, organized by a U.S. Senate labor appropriations subcommittee. The following day miners spoke again at a governor's commission established to investigate mine voids and shoddy maps.

Mayhugh, the youngest of the trapped miners, shook listeners at the Senate field hearings when he revealed that Fogel, their section foreman, had said he had warned company officials of deteriorating conditions in the mine. Fogel told the trapped miners that two days before the accident, Black Wolf Coal Co. president David Rebuck had expressed concern about unsafe conditions. "He was scared we were mining up in there," the foreman said.

"We were on our deathbeds with only an hour left to live, and I guess he [Fogel] wanted to clear his conscience," Mayhugh testified.

Fogel did not attend the hearing; he was in Hollywood at the time working on the production of a TV movie about the incident. Both the company president and the foreman have maintained they had no inkling of the flood danger.

Miners reported increasingly wet conditions and loose top that caused production to slow by half in the days leading up to the disaster.

Speaking to the Senate subcommittee, John Phillippi described how the nine trapped miners gasped for breath and vomited from mine gases released from the abandoned mine before an emergency ventilation shaft reached them. The bosses "knew there was a problem," he said. "We told them, and it's unbelievable that they can sit there and lie."

Calls for open hearings

Phillippi expressed concern that the official investigations by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would result in a cover-up. "We need to know the truth," he said.

Both MSHA and the DEP have been conducting closed door investigations. The state attorney general also revealed recently that he has been looking into whether or not to file criminal charges in the matter.

By contrast, the seven trapped miners, along with friends, relatives, members of the community, and officials of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) have demanded open hearings.

MSHA head David Lauriski expressed surprise at Mayhugh's testimony. Nothing like this had ever been reported to MSHA, he said.

"What does he expect—MHSA interrogated the men in front of the company and the company lawyer, with no representation of their own!" said Joe Main, health and safety director for the UMWA, before the October 22 hearing.

Company and state officials have laid the blame for the disaster on inaccurate maps of the old Saxman mine, which closed in 1964. Investigators have found that the development of the Quecreek mine was based on a 1957 production map. As they worked in the mine, miners believed they were hundreds of feet away from the old workings.

Only after the accident—one month after, in fact—did a 1964 map marked "final" turn up in a Somerset County museum showing the sealed mine to be substantially larger than had been believed, to the extent that it overlapped areas permitted for Quecreek mine development.

Were inaccurate maps the only issue?

Coal industry officials insist mapping was the only issue. "What we want is for the mapping issue to be addressed. We think once that question is addressed, then this commission has answered the question of Quecreek," said George Ellis, president of the Pennsylvania Coal Association.

"Maps of old workings have to be validated, perhaps by core drilling, even if it costs a lot of money. That's better than costing lives," said Messer, the miners' attorney, to the governor's commission.

The burden of ensuring mine safety falls on the operators, he said, charging that Black Wolf Coal, which operates Quecreek mine, "is a paper corporation, a shield" used as a tactic to foil workers' attempts to maintain union coverage, and to distance the real owners from liability in the case of such accidents. Black Wolf owns no equipment, and sells all its coal to Mincorp. Its president is a former Mincorp executive.

Messer noted that Black Wolf Mining did not even keep on the premises a horizontal drill—a vital piece of equipment for safe operations. Such a tool allows miners to drill ahead to check for water and mine gases.

Messer also questioned the process that allowed Mincorp to get a state mining permit in 1999 despite protests and warnings by dozens of neighbors.

Also attending the Somerset meeting were eight of the nine miners who were able to escape the flooded mine and had then joined the rescue effort. Several defended the company's safety record, placing the blame on government regulatory failings and bad maps, and said wet conditions in the mine prior to the inundation were typical for the area.

Tony Lane, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, addressed the commission. Lane is an underground coal miner near Pittsburgh and a member of the UMWA. He described what he had learned by talking to Somerset residents during a fact-finding trip to the area while the miners were still trapped.

Lane called for open hearings to investigate the accident. "This way working people can see what the companies are doing, and also see what the government agencies are doing." He pointed to foot-• dragging by MSHA in investigating other recent mine disasters, such as the sludge spill two years ago in Inez, Kentucky, and the mine explosion last year in Alabama. "There is still no report on the Brookwood disaster, which claimed the lives of 13 Alabama miners," he said.

"The problem can't be reduced to one of bad maps. It's greed," said Lane. "The system of greed—capitalism. The real question is what happened when the DEP gave permission for the mine to open despite a public outcry at the time, and also accepted the maps provided by the company without question."

Increase in mine fatalities

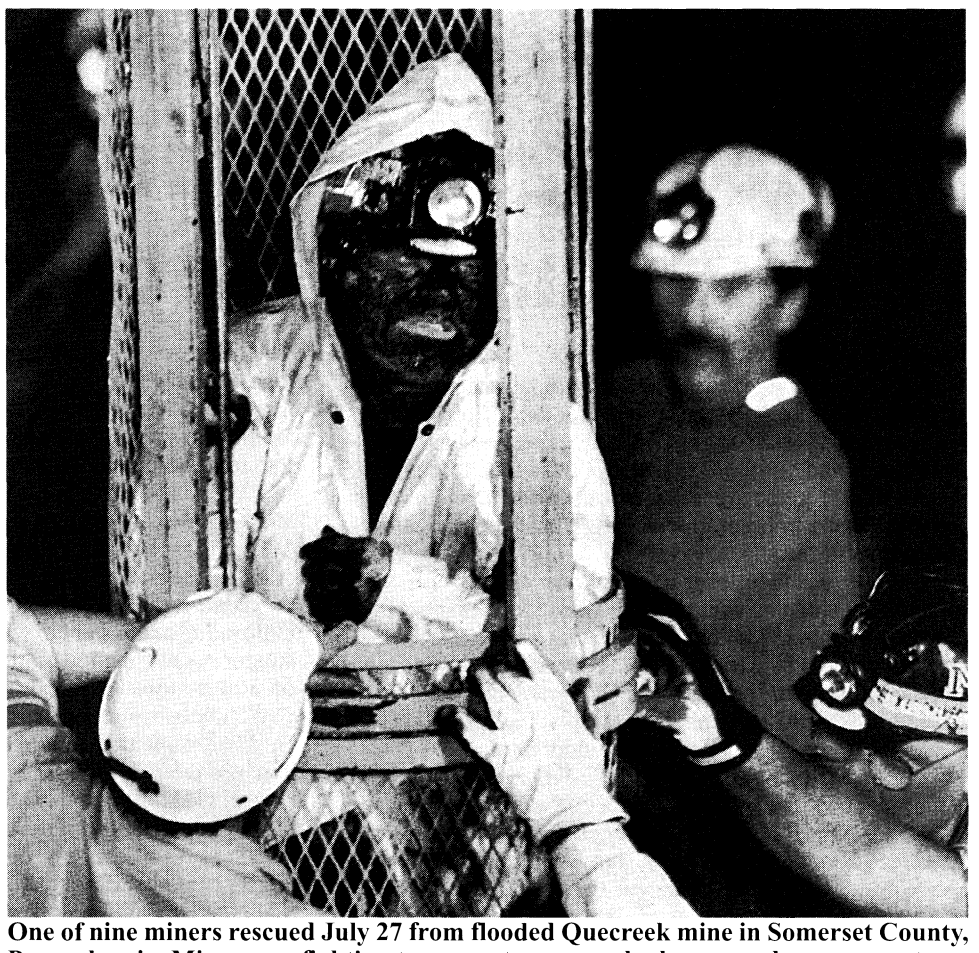
Lane pointed to the fact that the rate of mine fatalities has climbed back up in recent years. "It's workers' actions that brought about real changes in safety. That has been shown throughout the history of the miners and our union," he said.

Last year 42 mine workers were killed on the job, as the fatality rate climbed for the third straight year. So far this year, 17 miners have been killed.

In article published in the October 25 *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, UMWA international president Cecil Roberts wrote that the Senate subcommittee hearing "raises some serious questions," including the fact that several miners had sounded the alarm to the Black Wolf Coal bosses about the safety hazards in the mine.

Roberts noted, "Had the Quecreek miners been members of the United Mine Workers of America, they would have had a contractual right of 'refusal to work.'" He added that "if management disputed their claim, the UMWA mine health and safety committee would have intervened and taken the miners' concerns—such as water—directly to management and the appropriate state and federal agencies."

Feeling the heat of the miners' testimony, Pennsylvania senator Arlen Spector submitted a letter to U.S. Attorney Mary Beth Buchanan a couple of days after the hearing. "We heard testimony indicating that certain federal mine regulations may have been violated" by Black Wolf Coal, he wrote. In a separate letter to Labor Secretary Elaine Chao, Spector stated that "substantial questions about the fairness and impartiality of this investigation" had been raised.



One of nine miners rescued July 27 from flooded Quecreek mine in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Miners are fighting to prevent cover-up by bosses and government.

Fund makes gains in California, Iowa

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The campaign to raise $105,000 internationally toward the publication of revolutionary books got a boost in San Francisco and Des Moines last week.

Supporters of the fund in San Francisco held a successful meeting October 26 highlighting the newest Pathfinder title, *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba* by Cuban author Tomás Diez Acosta. The book examines the historic events of four decades ago, in which the administration of President John F. Kennedy brought the world to the precipice of nuclear war.

Earlier that day 40,000 people had rallied in the city to protest Washington's war moves against Iraq. Socialist workers and young socialists had attended that protest, using Pathfinder books and the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to offer a communist perspective to demonstrators.

Featured speaker Ernie Mailhot, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, said that 40 years ago working people in Cuba had reacted to the 1962 crisis not with panic but with confidence in their ability to defend their revolution and in their battle-tested revolutionary leadership.

The audience responded to an explanation of the fund appeal by contributing $1,905. The event raised to 54 the number of contributors in the Bay Area.

Joel Britton, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Illinois, spoke on similar themes at a Pathfinder Fund event in Des Moines, Iowa, on October 25, describing how the Cuban people prepared to defend their revolution against Washington's attacks.

Britton explained how—far from heading for the bomb shelters—several thousand young people in cities across the United States, including himself, went into the streets together with others to protest the Kennedy administration's warlike stance, including its preparations to invade Cuba.

During the discussion a farm activist said that he looked to the Iraqi people to fight fiercely against a U.S. invasion. He also asked Britton why one couldn't identify oneself as an "American" at the same time as opposing the war in Iraq. Britton responded by pointing to Malcolm X, whose speeches are published by Pathfinder. Malcolm, he said, took a proletarian anti-imperialist stance and explained that he was "not an American but a victim of Americanism."

A student originally from Turkey joined other forum participants in discussions that lasted until midnight. He described how the imperialists from Europe and the United States continued to dominate the Turkish economy. Some $335 in donations and pledges was taken in at the meeting, and total pledges are now over the $1,200 goal projected from the city.

Fund supporters in several areas have taken steps forward this week, with more than half a dozen having advanced toward their target by 20 percent. Funds collected now total $51,298, nearly 50 percent of the way toward the international goal, but still behind schedule as we head into the final three weeks of the drive.

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Washington DC	3,000	1,050	35%
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Boston MA	3,500	1,040	30%
Miami FL	2,100	578	28%
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U.S. total	**96,500**	**47,095**	**49%**
New Zealand	**1,500**	**1,222**	**81%**
Australia	1,500	1,010	67%
Canada	4,500	1,812	40%
France	400	59	15%
Sweden	1,400	100	7%
Iceland	150	0	0%
United Kingdom	1,200	0	0%
International total	**107,150**	**51,298**	**48%**
Int'l goal/should be	**105,000**	**76,650**	**73%**

Greek vote registers social crisis, polarization

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece—Parties of the right made gains in the final round of Greece's local government elections, held in October. The conservative New Democracy (ND), which is the main opposition party on a national level, scored victories in 30 prefectures, or regional governments. By contrast the governing social democratic PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) came out ahead in 23 prefectures.

The election results registered the country's growing social polarization. The parties of the labor movement by and large maintained their electoral support while, at the opposite end of the spectrum, right-wing demagogue Georgos Karatzaferis made headway in his efforts to form an ultrarightist opposition formation.

Karatzaferis pitched his campaign around strong Greek nationalist themes, railing against "globalization" and the supposed "domination of the Greek economy" by bureaucrats in the European Union (EU). He called for a "Greece that belongs to Greeks," making it clear that he does not include immigrants in the latter category, and targeted immigrant workers from Albania for particular venom.

From PASOK, Theodore Pangalos, a senior party member and former foreign minister, did his best to put a positive spin on the nationwide results. "PASOK's strategy," he said, "was to avert a crushing defeat nationwide. It has succeeded." Alongside its setbacks in many municipalities, the party's candidate for the important post of governor of the greater Athens region defeated her ND rival. The new mayor of the city itself, on the other hand, is the ND's Dora Bakyoanni, who gained almost 60 percent of the vote.

PASOK has governed Greece for 18 of the last 21 years. Its support held relatively steady in most parts of the country, with the exception of the cotton-farming districts of the north and south, where many farmers joined the large nationwide absentee vote or switched their votes to the ND.

Other parties with links to the working class, including the Communist Party and the parties in the Coalition of the Left, did about as well as in the previous municipal elections in 1998, receiving a total of roughly one-fifth of the ballot.

Karatzaferis, the leader of the newly formed rightist Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS, an acronym that means "people") took almost 14 percent of the total vote. LAOS brings together a number of politicians who earlier jumped ship from ND and PASOK. Karatzaferis himself was a longtime ND member of Parliament and a leading party figure in Athens.

"Greek jobs must come first," said the rightist leader in his speech at the founding of the new party on September 14, 2001. "Albanians are taking the money of Greek taxpayers and sending it back to Albania to buy Kalashnikovs to attack Ioannina and Thesprotia," he claimed.

Such statements received a hearing in the wake of years of anti-immigrant attacks by the PASOK government, carried out in the name of fighting unemployment. Greece's unemployment rate exceeds 10 percent, while wages stand at 71 percent of the EU average.

Before the elections Archbishop Chrystodoulos, the national leader of the Orthodox church, helped to confer respectability on the new party by reassuring prospective LAOS voters that they were "good Christians."

Although Karatzaferis disavows any association with fascism, two leaders of Chrisi Avgi, a fascist group whose cadre have attacked immigrants and left-wing campaigners in the streets, joined the new party's slate in the Athens-Pireas prefecture.

During the campaign Karatzaferis also denied accusations that he supports the deposed Greek king and admires the military junta that held the country in an iron grip for seven years after a 1967 coup. Well-known figures from the dictatorship, however, are regular guests on the television stations that he owns.

From this broadcast platform, Karatzaferis unveils his full program, accusing Jews and the Pope of being the architects of the "new world order" that brings with it wars and growing economic hardship. "The whole country is being run by Jews," he has stated.

"They say that to get ahead you have to be one of three things," he said. "A Jew, a homosexual or a communist. We are none of these."

The stable vote for the workers' parties, in spite of their own nationalist stances and inability to chart a way forward out the country's economic crisis, in part registered the fact that many people reject this demagogy and consider it dangerous.

Workers, students in Bolivia march against imperialist trade pact

Organized by the Bolivian Workers Federation (COB), 2,000 unionists, retired workers, and university students marched October 24 in La Paz, Bolivia, against the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The U.S. rulers seek to use this trade bloc, which has nothing to do with free trade, to break down barriers to their exports, reinforce unequal terms of trade with Latin American nations, and gain an edge over imperialist rivals. The agreement will not "generate jobs and will push aside social and labor rights," said COB leader Saturnino Mallcu.

Reactionary 'countryside' march held in London

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Some 400,000 people joined the "liberty and livelihood" march organized here by the Countryside Alliance. Built under the demand "freedom of choice for country sport" and similar slogans, the September 22 march opposed draft legislation restricting the traditional hunting of foxes and other animals. Although working farmers, rural workers, and other working people turned out for the action in large numbers, the event bore the reactionary stamp of the landlord and capitalist forces who called it.

The Countryside Alliance, which was founded five years ago, includes among its leaders prominent businessman-farmer Robin Hanbury-Tenison, Gerald Grosvenor—the Duke of Westminster and reportedly the richest private landowner in the United Kingdom—and Hugh van Cutsem, a Norfolk landowner. A demonstration called by the organization in March 1998 attracted 250,000 people to the capital.

Heir to the British throne Charles Windsor identified with the march, declaring that farmers were more discriminated against than Blacks and gays. On the demonstration itself were Conservative Party leader Iain Duncan Smith and Deborah Vivien, who is known as the Duchess of Devonshire, the largest landowner in the Peak District and "one of Britain's leading aristocrats," according to *The Times*.

The reactionary character of the action and the pro-Conservative Party stance of many of its leaders were expressed in placards declaring that Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe, British Labour Party prime minister Anthony Blair, and Iraq president Saddam Hussein "are all dictators against country people." Other signs read, "Blair kills more farmers than Mugabe" and "Vote Labour—for the release of IRA terrorists, paedophiles and for the jailing of country folk."

On instructions from march stewards, participants fell silent as they passed the Whitehall Cenotaph—erected as a memorial to Britain's imperialist wars—in order to "respect the dead."

Alliance leaders welcomed to the action a contingent of wealthy white landowners from Zimbabwe, where the government has recently taken steps against the domination of landownership by such layers.

Organized under 'rural heritage' guise

The march organizers built participation in the demonstration through an appeal to "country folk" of all classes, from agricultural laborers, to working farmers, to super-rich landowners. Under the guise of protecting the rural "way of life," they sought to defend the privileges of the wealthy people for which the alliance speaks. This attempt to draw working people into a common front with their exploiters against alleged mutual enemies in the towns was reflected in placards that read "Urban Ignorance Destroys Rural Heritage."

"I believe with passion in the right of the rural minority to pursue its way of life in peace," said alliance supporter Sir Peter de la Billiere, who served as head of the British armed forces in the 1990–91 Gulf War.

Right-wing commentators in the big-business press echoed those themes in the days following the march. Charles Moore, the editor of the right-wing *Daily Telegraph*, wrote, "in that still large part of British culture that has any link with rural life, hunting is firmly ingrained. If you are part of that culture... your prejudice—your cultural DNA—is invincibly on their side." Writing in *The Times*, William Rees Mogg declared that "modern urban culture is too greedy."

Many exploited farmers who have been hit hard by a massive decline in their incomes joined the march, alongside workers from rural areas, middle-class layers and some students. Farmers For Action, an organization that has led recent blockades of dairies to press its fight for higher milkfat prices, marched with a coffin to symbolize the crisis facing dairy farmers.

Sue Flowers, a dairy farmer from the Peak District, said she was marching "firstly for farming and secondly in defense of hunting, which is necessary for vermin control." Flowers had recently joined 35 other people in a blockade of Wiseman's dairies (milk processing plants) in Manchester to try to force the company to lift prices to farmers. Over the past nine months several major dairies have slashed their payouts.

A recent National Farmers' Union survey of a range of farms found that the average farmer's annual income was just £10,000 (£1 = US$1.55).

"The recent 2p a liter increase that we received is an insult and does not make up for what we have lost," Flowers said. "We need to keep on fighting." Farmers For Action organized a one-day strike of farmers in August, and has threatened to escalate this action throughout the autumn and winter period.

Alison and Caroline Branfoot, beef farmers from the New Forest, told the *Militant* about the devastating impact on farmers' livelihoods of government regulations aimed at preventing the spread of foot and mouth disease. "Herds were locked down—even ones not infected—and there was no support from the government," Alison said. "Farmers watched their livestock being eradicated and suicides among farmers have increased."

In opposition to the government's policy of mass slaughtering and compensating only farmers who directly lost cattle, Alison asserted that the government should have "ring-vaccinated herds," an approach that seeks to target and quarantine infected animals.

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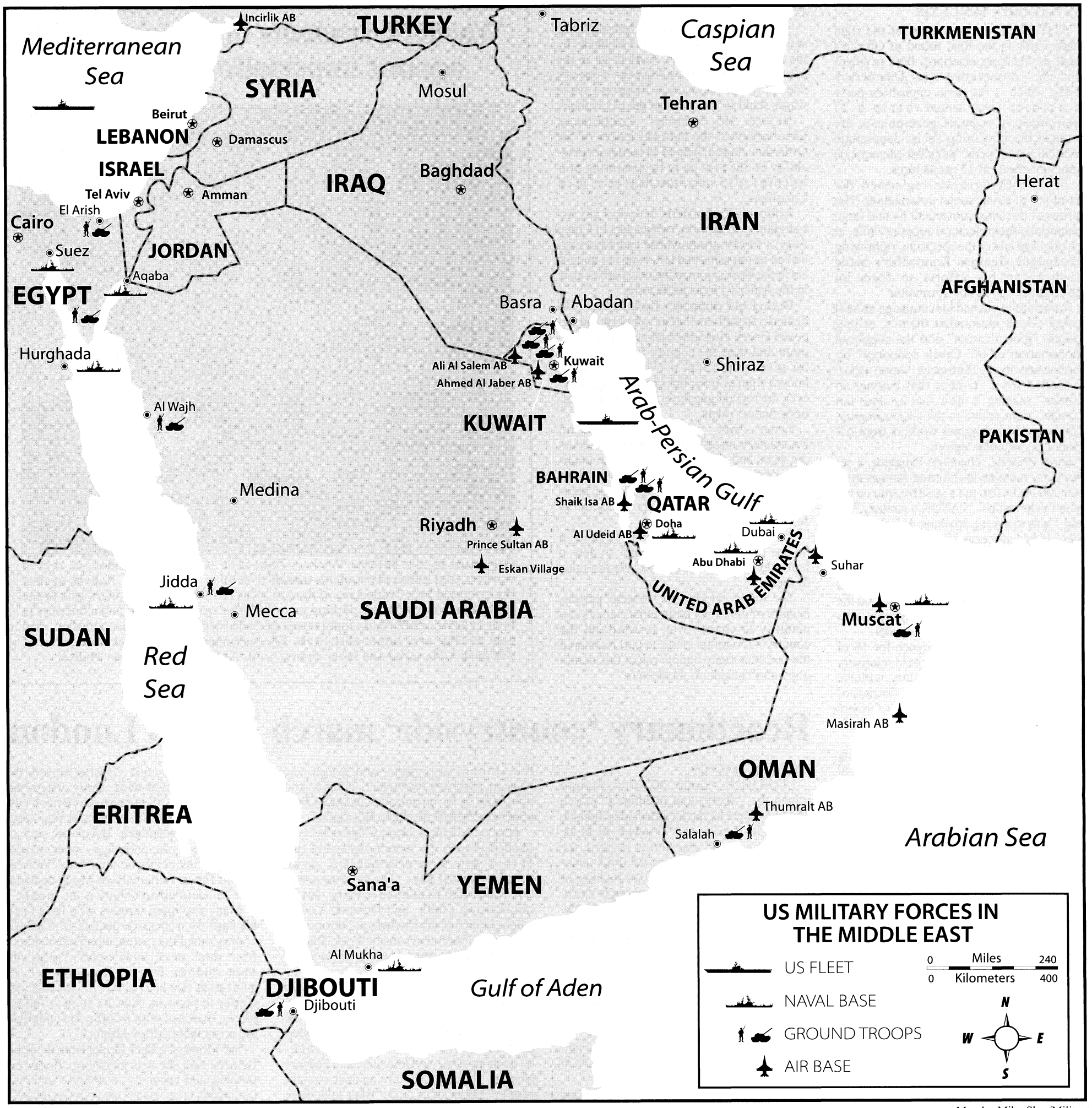
Imperialist military forces in Mideast



Map by Mike Shur/Militant

The Central Command (Centcom) of the U.S. armed forces has stationed some 60,000 military personnel in the region stretching from Central Asia to East Africa. Roughly 30,000 of them are in the Arab-Persian Gulf. Key bases, naval forces, and troop concentrations are pictured in the map above. Other information listed below also includes British forces and military materiel.

KUWAIT

Military personnel: more than 9,000, including 5,000 at Camp Doha. Hundreds of Army and Marine command staff are stationed in Kuwait.

Warplanes: 80 aircraft, including planes that patrol southern "no-fly" zone. A total of 210 U.S. and British aircraft patrol these zones in the north and south from different locations on land and at sea.

Storage: U.S. forces have built 37 huge warehouses in Kuwait and Qatar. In each country they have stored equipment and vehicles for an armored brigade, including 115 tanks, 60 fighting vehicles, 100 armored personnel carriers, and 20 howitzers.

SAUDI ARABIA

Military personnel: 6,600, mostly Air Force.

The Prince Sultan air base, with 72 warplanes, is the command headquarters for attacks on "no-fly" zone in south. It was also headquarters of bombing campaign against Afghanistan.

BAHRAIN

Headquarters for the Fifth Fleet and regional headquarters for U.S. Marine Corps.

Military personnel: 4,200.

Warplanes: Shaikh Isa Air Base hosts bomber and fighter aircraft.

QATAR

Military personnel: 3,300. Some 600 Centcom commanders will arrive in November.

Al-Udeid air base has longest runway in Gulf, 10,000-troop capacity, and is being expanded by U.S. forces.

Storage: (see Kuwait) holds vehicles and equipment for an armored brigade.

OMAN

Military personnel: 2,400, mostly Air Force. British Royal Air Force HQ is in Oman.

Warplanes: 24, including B-1B bombers.

Storage: equipment and fuel stored for three bases and 26,000 support personnel.

JORDAN

In August U.S. forces conducted "Infinite Moonlight" maneuvers with Jordanian army. "Early Victor '02" exercises in October involved 1,400 troops from the United States, along with Jordanian, Omani, and Kuwaiti forces. Other U.S. exercises in Kuwait, Qatar, and elsewhere are also part of U.S. military buildup.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Military personnel: 500, mostly Air Force.

U.S. reconnaisance and refueling aircraft use UAE bases.

Storage: some military equipment.

TURKEY

Military personnel: 4,000 U.S. and "allied" personnel, including 1,400 supporting and flying F-15 and F-16 fighters.

Warplanes: about 60, most of which are at Incirlik air base, the base for the patrols of the northern "no-fly" zones in Iraq.

DJIBOUTI

Military personnel: 800, including some 400 Special Operations troops.

DIEGO GARCIA

(Outside area of map) British colonial outpost in the Indian Ocean.

Military personnel: 1,900, mostly Air Force

Warplanes: Fleet of eight U.S. B-52 heavy bombers. U.S. government has asked London for go-ahead to base B-2 Stealth bombers here.

Used by Washington as a staging point in the Gulf war.

AT SEA, on ships in Arab-Persian Gulf and Mediterranean Sea:

Military personnel: 25,000.

Ships: aircraft carriers *Abraham Lincoln* and *George Washington,* each of which holds 70 warplanes. Each of their battle groups includes a number of warships and supply craft.

British carrier *Ark Royal* conducted exercises in the Mediterranean in October.

BRITISH FORCES not listed above:

Roughly 1,250 British soldiers are deployed in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, stationed there originally for the U.S.-led assault on Afghanistan. Another 1,175 British troops, mostly air force personnel, operate alongside their U.S. counterparts in attacking the "no-fly" zones over northern and southern Iraq. Officials in London have said that they plan to deploy 30,000 soldiers in the war on Iraq.

U.S., Japan press north Korea on nuclear arms issue

Students rally outside U.S. embassy in Seoul in August to protest presence of the 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in south Korea. U.S. military enforces division of Korean nation.

BY JACK WILLEY

A couple of weeks after U.S. officials stated that north Korea's government has admitted pursuing a several-year effort to extract enriched uranium as part of long-term research into nuclear weapons technology, the heads of government of the United States, Japan, and south Korea issued a statement demanding that Pyongyang "dismantle this program in a prompt and verifiable manner."

U.S. president George Bush used the October 26–27 APEC forum in Mexico—a meeting of representatives of countries in the imperialist-dominated Asia Pacific Economic Council—to put together the motion targeting the workers state.

At the same time, Washington's low-key approach to the controversy—in comparison to its bellicose stance toward Iraq—has drawn widespread comment. "We want to make sure that we move deliberately, we move with patience, that we do not create a crisis in the region," said U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell.

While making no official comment on the original "revelations," the north Korean foreign ministry has affirmed its "right to defend its sovereignty."

Pyongyang is "ready to seek a negotiated settlement of this issue," continued the ministry's October 25 statement. It called on the U.S. government to reach a resolution of the situation based on assurances "of nonaggression."

As the issue as unfolded, the 1994 Agreed Framework between Pyongyang and Washington has effectively been suspended.

Under the 1994 agreement, the U.S., Japanese, and south Korean governments promised to provide $4 billion for the construction of nuclear power reactors in north Korea, in exchange for an agreement by Pyongyang to freeze any nuclear weapons development it had undertaken. One of the reactors was supposed to be completed by 2003, but after repeated delays by Washington, site preparations only began in August. The deadline for their completion was pushed back two years.

Pyongyang's October 25 statement criticized Washington "abnormal" demand "that negotiations should be held after the DPRK puts down its arms." The foreign ministry noted that since 1994 "the U.S. has persistently pursued a hostile policy toward the DPRK and maintained economic sanctions on it."

Defensive posture

Over decades of U.S. hostility, Pyongyang has repeatedly explained that its armed forces are necessary to deter and, if necessary, defend against a U.S. imperialist invasion. Today, 37,000 U.S. troops are stationed in south Korea, including many along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the border with the north. In addition, the area is patrolled by the nuclear-armed Seventh Fleet of the U.S. Navy.

After discussions with Japanese government representatives, U.S. assistant secretary of state James Kelly said that his counterparts in Tokyo "are not going to give any money without resolution of the nuclear issues." Such "money" includes food aid that is needed to counter food shortages and the devastation of agriculture that followed a series of floods and other natural disasters in the mid-to-late 1990s.

In September Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi visited north Korea and signed a declaration that projected some increased economic ties. Tokyo entered the unprecedented high-level discussions as part of broader attempts to expand its influence as an imperialist power in Asia.

U.S. presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer said that Washington sought to build "an international coalition" among "many of the countries on whom north Korea traditionally relies for technology, economic, and diplomatic support." These countries, he asserted, "want good and improved relations with the United States, and they have no interest in a nuclearized north Korea."

U.S. officials singled out the Pakistani government for public criticism in this effort, alleging that in the late 1990s Islamabad supplied north Korea with equipment suitable for extracting weapons-grade uranium in exchange for missiles.

After talks with Chinese president Jiang Zemin, Bush declared October 25 that the Chinese and U.S. governments would "work together" to "persuade" north Korea to cease its alleged nuclear program.

Fully 33 percent of north Korea's foreign trade is with China. In his only reported comment on the broader issue, Jiang said that "China has always held the position that the Korean peninsula ought to be nuclear weapons–free."

While joining Washington in the statement at the APEC forum, the south Korean regime has continued negotiations with Pyongyang on the implementation of previous agreements between the two governments, including rail links along the peninsula.

History of imperialist aggression

In January Bush named north Korea, Iran, and Iraq as members of an "axis of evil." In March, the Pentagon's "leaked" Nuclear Posture Review named the DPRK as one of the seven countries that are targeted by its nuclear missiles. That same month, Washington and Seoul conducted joint military

Continued on page 11

How antiunion Taft-Hartley law has been used

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

When President George Bush invoked the Taft-Hartley Act against 10,500 dockworkers, citing that "national security" and "our military" were imperiled by the work stoppage imposed by the shipping bosses, it was the first time the law had been used in 24 years. In 1978 coal miners stood up to former president James Carter, a "friend of labor," who invoked the act and threatened to use troops to break their 110-day strike.

The Taft-Hartley measure, however, has been used many times in the past half century to intervene in labor battles. The Democratic administration of Harry Truman, another "friend of labor," invoked the antilabor law no less than 12 times in response to the greatest labor upsurge in U.S. history—a strike wave in 1945-46, which included a national maritime strike that shut down every port on the country's coastlines.

Prior to Truman's antilabor offensive, his predecessor, President Franklin Roosevelt, had attained a degree of success in collaborating with union officials in imposing restrictions on workers' fighting for higher wages and other demands. This included "no strike pledge" resolutions adopted by the officialdom during the Second World War. Roosevelt bumped into a hurdle, however, after threatening to call on soldiers in 1943 to force 530,000 striking coal miners to return to work. The miners, who refused to work for starvation wages, defiantly responded to the president: "You can't dig coal with bayonets," and subsequently won their demands for an acceptable pay increase.

A steady rise of unauthorized strikes in 1944 and 1945 started breaking down the "no strike" policy adopted by the union officialdom. Some 43,000 oil workers in 20 states walked off the job in September 1945, the opening shot of a strike wave that eventually involved up to 5 million workers. This fight coincided with tens of thousands of U.S. troops overseas waging "Bring us home" demonstrations after the Japanese government formally surrendered to the U.S.-led Allied powers. Many of the soldiers involved in those protests were workers who had participated in the labor upsurge of the 1930s that had transformed the union movement.

The labor actions in 1945-46 involved 225,000 auto workers, 200,000 coal miners, 70,000 truck drivers, 40,000 machinists, and thousands of other workers who went on strike. In response to those union battles, a flood of antilabor bills poured into the congressional hoppers to stanch the rising labor militancy.

After taking over several facilities, including the railroads and struck coal mines, Truman demanded Congress draft an "emergency" bill in May 1946 that would immediately authorize the president to draft into the armed forces workers on strike. Those who defied the proposed measure faced a $5,000 fine, one year in prison, getting fired, or losing seniority rights.

'Slave labor bill'

The president's antilabor drive—which included the "Truman Doctrine" of U.S. military intervention against anticolonial and anticapitalist struggles, and an assault on the Bill of Rights that led to the rise of the McCarthyite anticommunist witchhunt—was a prelude to the Taft-Hartley bill, which became law in 1947. Dubbed the "slave labor bill" by unionists, the measure was vetoed by Truman, posing as a "friend of labor." A two-thirds majority in Congress promptly overrode the president's veto in June of that year.

Within one year after the law went into effect Truman dropped his "friend of labor" mask to obtain 12 injunctions against striking West Coast longshore workers, railworkers preparing to walk out, packinghouse workers, and other unionists, under the "national health and safety" provisions of the Act or its "unfair labor practices" clause.

The Taft-Hartley Act contains a number of clauses that authorize the government to impose restrictions on the rights of unions. The president is authorized to obtain federal court injunctions to declare strikes illegal for a "cooling off" period of 80 days. It also requires unions to file annual financial statements with the government.

When the law was passed some 212,000 outraged miners walked out of the pits in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Alabama, Virginia, and West Virginia. "Let the Senators dig the coal," was their battle cry before they won a 44-cent hourly wage increase.

Three decades later the coal miners once again defied a Taft-Hartley injunction when they stood up to President Carter's vow "to protect our country and "to preserve the health and safety of our people."

"Let Carter mine the coal," said UMWA members across the country, who stayed out for 110 days despite the president's threats to fine or jail their union leaders, seize their union treasuries, and cut off food stamps for their families. Carter was forced to back down and the coal bosses offered a new contract that included a 30 percent pay increase over three years and dropped most of their antiunion demands. That coal strike was a political victory that stayed the hand of the U.S. rulers from using the Taft-Hartley slave labor law for nearly 25 years.

Pro-boss strike in Venezuela

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The pro-imperialist opposition to Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez organized a 12-hour nationwide strike October 21 demanding that he resign or call early elections. The strike, the third since December, was called by leaders of Fedecámaras, the main bosses' organization, and top officials of the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV).

The action took place eight days after a massive mobilization by hundreds of thousands of working people in the streets of Caracas to protest opposition efforts to foster a coup against the elected government.

The strike shut down some factories and stores, and canceled some airline flights. The main newspapers, which are virulently opposed to the Chávez government, did not publish that day. Nonetheless, "more people reported to work Monday than during general strikes in December and April," an Associated Press dispatch reported. Auto plants, public schools, banks, many stores, gas stations, hospitals, and the Caracas subway remained open.

Top officials of the powerful oil workers union, Fedepetrol, were divided. Some urged workers to stay home, while others did not, acknowledging a 35 percent pay hike in September granted by the state-owned oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela. The oil company reported that the strike did not halt its operations.

Venezuela, with the largest oil reserves in the Western hemisphere, is the fourth largest supplier of oil to the United States.

The day after the general strike, 14 generals and admirals, led by Gen. Enrique Medina Gómez, went on national television calling for a revolt against the Chávez government. Speaking in Altamira, a wealthy district in the capital city of Caracas, they declared themselves in "liberated territory." The officers claimed they are not trying to incite a coup, but that a clause in the nation's constitution permits citizens to rebel against a government deemed "undemocratic."

The officers who revolted had already been suspended from active command pending an investigation of their involvement in the April military coup that overthrew Chávez for two days before a popular countermobilization put him back in office.

Gen. Medina accused Chávez of promoting "class hatred." Bosses and landlords, who oppose a limited land reform and other measures encroaching on their power and profits, are concerned that these steps heighten expectations among workers and farmers that their conditions will improve.

In response to the insubordinate officers, the commander of Caracas's army garrison, Gen. Jorge Luis García Carneiro, declared "total support" for the government at an October 25 news conference where he was flanked by top military officers from all branches of the armed forces.

The Venezuelan government reported that it foiled two assassination plans and a coup plot in October. Meanwhile, the proimperialist opposition is planning a march on November 4, saying it plans to deliver 1.5 million petitions demanding a referendum on the Chávez government.

1990-91 U.S. assault on Iraq: the opening guns of World War III

U.S. Marines prepare to board Sea Knight helicopter in the Saudi desert in 1991. Washington's assault on Iraq that year, says Jack Barnes, "was the first of a number of wars that it will continue fighting against peoples and governments in the Third World, intertwined with intensifying conflicts among the rival imperialist powers themselves."

Printed below is an excerpt from the lead article in *New International* no. 7, "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq." The article is based on a talk given in Cleveland in March 1991, one month after U.S.-led imperialist forces carried out a six-week bombing campaign and four-day ground invasion of Iraq. Jack Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The assault against Iraq was the first of Washington's wars since World War II in which it sought to use its military might to deal blows, indirect but palpable, to U.S. imperialism's rivals, especially in Bonn, Tokyo, and Paris. The Gulf war exacerbated the conflicts and divisions between Washington and its imperialist competitors, as well as between these rival powers themselves. While we know these sharpening conflicts already existed (every working person has been deluged by protectionist propaganda from the U.S. government, bourgeois politicians, trade union bureaucrats, and their radical hangers-on), the war brought them to the surface with greater force and accelerated them to a degree not seen in world politics for some time.

Coming out of World War II, U.S. imperialism emerged the dominant power in the world imperialist system, both economically and militarily. For a substantial period following that war the rate of profit, and for even longer the tempo of growth of the mass of profits, was rising in all the imperialist countries. As a result, competition between the imperialist powers over markets for commodities and capital and over sources of raw materials was buffered.

Capitalist decline

Since the mid-1970s, however, the combination of the declining rate of profit, halting growth in the mass of profits, and relative slowdown in economic expansion has precipitated growing, sometimes sharp rivalry among the imperialist ruling classes. The years 1974-75 saw the first worldwide recession since 1937, as economic interdependence among the major capitalist powers grew alongside their competition and conflict. Although the sheer size and output of the U.S. capitalist economy remains enormous, and while it remains the largest market in the world, its position as an industrial and trading power has slipped substantially in recent decades in the face of growing challenges from German, Japanese, and other rivals. U.S. strategic military power remains unchallenged, however, and is the main lever the U.S. rulers have to compensate for their relative decline.

No power other than Washington could have transported and put in place the mammoth order of battle necessary to carry a war to Iraq. While waged behind the facade of a broad "international coalition," the war was a U.S. government operation, with London's enthusiastic support and with Paris being forced to join in out of weakness. Bonn and Tokyo—still limited in their use of strategic military power abroad flowing from their defeat in World War II—took no part in the combat at all.

Through the initiation, organization, domination, and execution of this war effort, U.S. imperialism strengthened its control over Gulf oil reserves, gaining additional leverage over its rivals in Bonn, Tokyo, and Paris in the competition for world markets for commodities and capital. By throwing the biggest military forces of any other imperialist power behind Washington's war effort, the rulers in London successfully sought to guarantee themselves a privileged junior position alongside U.S. finance capital in this region, which was once largely a British protectorate but had been penetrated more and more by French trade, aid, and loans. The commitment of combat forces abroad by the Canadian ruling class for the first time since the Korean War, and Ottawa's increasingly open and unqualified backing of Washington's foreign policy moves, indicate the pressure to grab more firmly onto the skirt of U.S. imperialism. The regime in New Zealand did the same, easing conflicts with Washington that have grown up there over port visits by U.S. ships armed with nuclear weapons. The Australian ruling class, as usual, made sure it was represented in Washington's armed entourage as well.

The relationship of forces that existed prior to the Gulf war among the capitalist powers in Europe has not been altered, but the national and state conflicts between them have been exacerbated. The war underlined the limits of the European Community's modest steps toward greater "economic integration" (lowered barriers to trade, investment, and travel).

The U.S.-engineered war drive exposed beyond doubt that these measures do not translate into a "common European" foreign policy, a "common European" military policy, let alone steps to build up a "common European" armed forces. Nor do they even translate into a "common European" economic policy, let alone a common currency; in fact, strides in this direction were set back.

Instead, the rival capitalist classes in the European Community (EC) were further propelled toward defending their separate state interests, whatever their common stake in a trading bloc in face of U.S. and Japanese competition.

The war set back German imperialism's goal of an integrated European Community under Bonn's domination. It battered the Bonn-led alliance of German and French imperialism in the EC. The French imperialists—who had made special ties to Baghdad one of the axes of their foreign policy in the Middle East, in hopes of regaining a stronger economic foothold in the Gulf—suffered humiliating cuffs from Washington....

The Gulf war revealed that important changes have occurred in what appeared to be the continuing pattern of world politics coming out of the initial consequences of World War II.

Washington was the chief victor in that war. It emerged as imperialism's predominant economic and strategic military power, and the only one nuclear-armed to boot. The Soviet toilers, at the sacrifice of tens of millions of workers and peasants, had repelled the onslaught by German imperialism. By the beginning of the 1950s capitalist property relations had been overturned throughout much of Eastern and Central Europe, even if under Stalinist-led regimes. By the latter half of the 1950s the USSR had its own nuclear arsenal (although not effective parity with Washington in weaponry and delivery systems until late in the 1960s).

Post-World War II pattern

Struggles for national independence and self-determination gained powerful momentum throughout the colonial and semicolonial world during World War II and its aftermath. During the decade and a half following 1945, victorious national liberation struggles in Azerbaijan, Yugoslavia, Albania, China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba grew over into deep-going anticapitalist revolutions; brought to power workers and peasants governments; and (except for Azerbaijan) culminated in the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists and the establishment of workers states.

Washington's wars in Korea and Vietnam were fought during a period of an ascending world capitalist economy. The U.S. rulers' dominance in the world imperialist system was still unchallenged, both economically and militarily. The dollar reigned supreme in world financial markets. But U.S. imperialism's German and Japanese rivals were not under sharp competitive economic pressures that pushed them toward direct military involvement in the Korean or Vietnam conflicts. (In fact, Tokyo took advantage of huge construction contracts during the Korean War to take the first steps toward rebuilding its devastated economy, without having to share the burden of the U.S.-organized military operations.)

Given this global picture that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, imperialist war was expected to be largely limited for the foreseeable future to the use of military power against the colonial revolution, as well as threats against the workers states. It was in the colonial world that the main organized, massive resistance to imperialism was continuing to take place—from Asia and Africa, to the Middle East and the Americas. Bourgeois-nationalist leaderships and Stalinist organizations frequently dominated these struggles, but the obstacles posed by this misleadership did not prevent substantial victories from being won by the toilers in their fight for colonial independence.

In some cases radical petty-bourgeois leaderships—responding in a determined way to blows aimed at them by an arrogant imperialism, and under the impetus of worker and peasant struggles against capitalist exploiters in city and countryside—went through an anticapitalist evolution. This was the case with respect to the July 26 Movement in Cuba; a major wing of the Algerian resistance movement; and a few organizations influenced by the Cuban revolution such as the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua and New Jewel Movement in Grenada. (Most petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships, on the other hand, did not evolve in this direction and ended up tailing or being integrated into bourgeois nationalist formations, or, in a few cases, Stalinist parties.)

This was the period of the so-called Cold War. At least from some point in the 1960s, the U.S. rulers operated on the assumption of a nuclear stalemate with Moscow, especially once the Soviet Union developed the capacity to hit U.S. targets with nuclear-tipped missiles. Meanwhile, the privileged castes in the Soviet, Eastern European, and Chinese workers states, acting as transmission belts for imperialist pressure, combined police-state repression with Stalinist political disorientation to push working people at home increasingly out of politics and keep them isolated from the international class struggle—to the great advantage of the imperialist ruling classes as well.

On the basis of this post-World War II pattern, most revolutionists concluded—correctly for the foreseeable future—that the international class struggle was not heading toward increased interimperialist military conflicts, but toward a standoff between the two major powers with strategic nuclear arsenals—U.S. imperialism and the Soviet Union—and their allies. A third world war, it was assumed, would necessarily find the imperialist powers aligned behind Washington in a conflict with the USSR. The rival capitalist ruling classes would avoid military conflicts among themselves, conflicts that would leave them vulnerable both to the Soviet Union and to the loss of additional portions of the world to anticapitalist revolutions.

I'm presenting a simplified version of this view of the world, but not a caricature. Whatever onesidedness there was to this assessment, it was grounded in the objective fact that due to the factors just cited there was no drive toward interimperialist military conflict during this initial period of postwar capitalist expansion.

This pattern corresponded with what was actually happening in world politics during the initial decades following World War II, including the generally low level of intensity of the class struggle in the United States and other imperialist countries. We were not heading toward intensified class combat on the picket lines and in the streets. We were not heading toward an ascending working-class movement bursting beyond the bourgeois political framework imposed by the petty-bourgeois union officialdom. We were not heading toward clashes in the streets with growing ultrarightist and fascist movements organized by wings of the employing class to try to take on and crush a class-struggle-oriented vanguard of the labor movement.

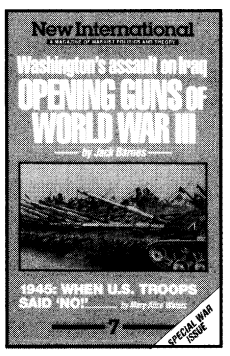
Class struggle in imperialist countries

With a time lag that could not be predicted, it was assumed, the class struggle in the United States and other imperialist countries would eventually turn a corner heading in this direction and begin narrowing the gap with the level of combat in the colonial world. This would lead to prerevolutionary situations that could result in major new advances in the international struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Politics and the class struggle in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and other Stalinist-dominated workers states were largely a nonfactor in this political equation. The existence of a substantial portion of the world where the domination of capitalist property relations had been abolished was recognized as a conquest of the toilers worth defending against imperialist assault. But the workers and farmers of these countries seemed more and more to have been frozen out of the world class struggle for an indefinite period by the repressive and politically stultifying domination of the castes and their police-state regimes—especially following the bloody defeat of the Hungarian revolution in 1956.[2] Meanwhile, as a way of maintaining bargaining leverage with Washington, the Stalinist regimes

Continued on Page 12

for further reading
Opening Guns of World War III
Washington's Assault on Iraq



Jack Barnes
The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars.

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Call-up of U.S. reservists planned for Gulf

Continued from front page
to the Middle East.

In addition, the U.S. merchant fleet is being readied for sealift services to supply U.S. armed forces once the war against Iraq gets under way.

According to an article appearing in the October *American Maritime Officers* online edition, "One certain immediate source of sealift would be the fleet of ships pre-positioned in the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia, the Mediterranean, and the Far East under Military Sealift Command charter. These vessels are stocked with tanks, trucks, trailers, and other vehicles, weapons, ammunition and other supplies for the Marine Corps, the Army and the Air Force."

One of the land bases out of which U.S. forces are operating is the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. Along with 2,200 U.S. troops, the base already stores two dozen KC-135 Stratotankers and KC-10A Extenders for inflight refueling operations. In cooperation with Washington, the Qatari regime has been expanding the base over the past six months to accommodate up to 10,000 troops and 120 aircraft.

U.S. general Thomas Franks, head of the U.S. Central Command, is scheduled to arrive at the base in early December with a contingent of 600 officers to coordinate Washington's invasion plans. Those officers were among the 900 who have been functioning out of the Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida.

'Protect U.S. access to Gulf oil'

An Air Force University document, accessible on the Pentagon's web site, spells out bluntly the role the United States Central Command sees itself playing in the Mideast region. Its purpose, the paper states, is "to protect the United States' vital interest in the region—uninterrupted, secure U.S./Allied access to Gulf oil."

The document adds, "The world's demand for oil can only be met by the vast oil reserves of the Arabian Gulf region." There, "unrestricted access by the industrial nations of the world to the Central Region's vast oil reserves remains an imperative." The Command, which was established in 1983, encompasses U.S. military operations over 19 nations of the Middle East, Northeast Africa, and Southwest Asia, including the waters of the Arab-Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and Gulf of Oman.

U.S. military preparations for an invasion of Iraq have been accompanied by a step-up in bombing attacks within the "no-fly" zones imposed by Washington at the end of the Gulf war in 1991. In violation of Iraqi sovereignty, the areas encompass both the northern and southern parts of the country. Since the zones were imposed, U.S. and British forces have carried out nearly 300,000 bombing attacks against Iraq over the past decade, with the pace accelerating over the past couple of months. The U.S. government is especially targeting Iraq's integrated air defense systems, with the aim of clearing the way for an unimpeded U.S. aerial assault upon the country. Just on October 22, for example, U.S. warplanes bombed targets in both the northern and southern zones.

Air surveillance over Yemen

As Washington makes its military might felt throughout the region, it is expanding surveillance operations over the Middle East as well. Pilotless U.S. spy aircraft are scouring a the desert area in Yemen, known as the Empty Quarter, supposedly to locate and track al Qaeda operatives residing in the area. The Empty Quarter, the largest unbroken stretch of sand in the world, runs 900 miles from the frontier of Yemen to the foothills of Oman, and 500 miles northward into central Saudi Arabia.

As part of militarization at home, Washington plans to station U.S. troops outside factories, power plants, transportation hubs, and medical centers.

"A U.S. war against Iraq is now a given," writes *Washington Times* commentator Arnaud de Borchgrave from Amman, Jordan, October 21. "United Nations proceedings are a charade that gives the United States time to get its strategic assets in place throughout the region. This should be done by December 15 and the war is expected to begin early in the New Year."

The U.S. government is pushing for a rapid vote in the United Nations Security Council on its proposed resolution governing a new round of "arms inspections" of Iraq, designed to pave the way for a U.S.-led invasion of the country. The governments of France and Russia have been holding out for wording in the new resolution empowering the Security Council to authorize such a military assault, while Washington insists it needs no prior UN approval for initiating the war against Baghdad.

French and Russian officials have made it clear they have no intention of vetoing the U.S. resolution, although they have been circulating their own "informal" alternative text.

In another development, Iraqi president Saddam Hussein issued an amnesty for many of the country's prisoners October 20, freeing tens of thousands from incarceration. Immediately after this message was broadcast in the media, relatives and friends gathered outside the Abu Ghraib prison, 20 miles west of Baghdad. They joined in helping to pry the prison gates open, freeing some 10,000 individuals at that facility alone.

Economic crisis marks elections in Ecuador

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The two candidates who came out ahead in the first round of Ecuador's presidential elections both built a following by promising to address the deep social and economic crisis afflicting the country, in which one-half the population of 13 million people lives below the official poverty line.

The October 20 ballot saw former army colonel Lucio Gutierrez receive just over 20 percent of the votes, 3 percent more than his rival, businessman Alvaro Noboa. The two will face off in the second round of voting on November 24.

Gutierrez received the endorsement of Pachakutik, the party organized by Ecuador's indigenous peoples. He had been among a group of army officers closely involved in the events following the mass popular rebellion led by those peoples who drove then-president Jamil Mahuad from power in 2000.

A spiraling economic crisis sparked the rebellion in January of that year. The banking system collapsed in 1998–99 as the largest banks in Ecuador went bankrupt, while rising unemployment and 60 percent inflation fueled massive protests. At the peak of the upsurge, thousands of workers and farmers entered the parliament building in Quito when Mahuad announced his decision to 'dollarize' the economy—replacing the country's currency, the sucre, with the U.S. dollar at a rate of 25,000 to one, and thereby slashing already meager wages overnight.

Rejecting the course of outright repression, Gutierrez and other officers backed an interim triumvirate government that organized to hand power to Mahuad's vice president, Gustavo Noboa.

Campaigning in military fatigues, Gutierrez states that he will "fight the oligarchists."At the same time, he says that he will negotiate with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a $240 million loan that the current administration has been unable to secure, and will also maintain the dollarized economy.

Noboa, a banana tycoon with a business empire that includes shipping, manufacturing and an airline, charges that Gutierrez is linked to the Colombian guerrilla movement and will bring "communism" and "anarchy" to Ecuador.

In spite of Gutierrez's assurances, reported Ecuadoran newspaper *La Hora,* the prospect of his election "generates anxiety in the markets," based on "doubts that he will carry out the unpopular terms of IMF loans."

Imperialists press north Korea

Continued from Page 9
exercises near the border with north Korea, the first such operations since 1993 and the largest since the 1950–53 Korean War.

Washington's latest moves are part of a long-term policy course. The root of the hostility toward the DPRK lies with the revolutionary struggle by the Korean people coming out of World War II to rid their country of first Japanese, then American imperialist occupation forces. In 1945 the representatives of the U.S. and Soviet governments agreed to the division of Korea at the 38th parallel.

The struggle in the north led to the establishment of a workers and farmers government and the overturn of capitalism. Washington launched a war from 1950 to 1953 to try to topple the workers and farmers government, killing some 4 million Koreans and leveling virtually every meaningful target in the north. The U.S. rulers failed in their goal and were forced to a standoff at the 38th parallel. Since its defeat U.S. imperialism has carried out a hostile course to try to overturn the Korean workers state.

—*MILITANT LABOR FORUMS*—

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Oppose U.S. Threats against North Korea! Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. Speaker: Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party. *Both events at 599 W. 187 St., 2nd Floor. Donation: $5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.*

UK firefighters postpone strike

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Officials of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) have suspended two 48-hour strikes by 50,000 firefighters scheduled for late October and early November. The strikes were postponed until November 6, when a further eight days of strike action have been planned.

The union had called the series of work stoppages as part of a campaign to press for a pay increase, to £400 in weekly take-home pay, or £8.50 an hour (£1=US$1.55).

The Labour Party government has mobilized 19,000 troops as a strikebreaking force to try to intimidate the firefighters. The authorities have also convened an emergency committee known as "Cobra," (Cabinet Office Room A), which has been used in recent years to mobilize state forces against blockades of fuel refineries by protesting farmers and truckers. Cobra includes representatives from the ministry of defense, office of the deputy prime minister's office, and other ministries.

The FBU officials' decision to suspend the strikes comes after negotiations with Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott and increasing pressure on the union in the big business press. Prescott announced that he was "delighted" with the decision and would now engage the union leaders in further talks on firefighters pay and what he called "modernization."

In a letter to *The Times*, Jeremy Beecham, chair of the Local Government Association, which employs the firefighters, indicated that the so-called modernization plans would involve changes in shifts and overtime levels.

Employers applauded the suspension of the strike. On the other hand, the president of the bosses Fire Chiefs' Association, Jeffrey Ord, complained that the union should have called off the actions altogether.

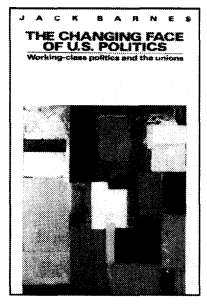
In recent weeks fire stations in several parts of London have been decked out with union banners and signs that urge motorists to "hoot if you support us."

Paul Davies is a meat packer in London.

From Pathfinder

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
Jack Barnes



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October 1962: How Cuba replied to U.S. threats

Continued from page 4
but rather nonstop attacks. Many of their sons and daughters have died as a result of armed attacks, sabotage, murders, subversive acts, and raids by pirate aircraft and ships instigated by the U.S. government. President Kennedy's statement offers not peace but the continuation of such acts.

Cuba's five points to resolve crisis

We therefore reiterate the five points that are essential to a genuine and definitive settlement of the crisis.

First: an end to the economic blockade and to all measures of commercial and economic pressure exercised against our country by the United States in every part of the world.

Second: an end to all subversive activities, to the bringing in of weapons and explosives by air and by sea, to the organization of mercenary invasions, to infiltration of spies and saboteurs, all these activities being conducted from the territory of the United States and a few countries that are its accomplices.

Third: an end to the acts of piracy carried out from bases in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

Fourth: an end to all violations of our airspace and territorial waters by U.S. aircraft and warships.

Fifth: withdrawal from the Guantánamo naval base and the return of Cuban territory occupied by the United States.

These are not irrational demands; they do not go against the rights of anyone; they are claims so legitimate, and so clearly limited to the rights of the Cuban people, that no one can object to them.

The U.S. government demands that the United Nations should verify, in our territory, the withdrawal of strategic weapons. Cuba demands that the United Nations should verify, in the territory of the United States, Puerto Rico, and other places where attacks on Cuba are prepared, the following: the dismantling of the training camps for mercenaries, spies, saboteurs, and terrorists; of the centers where subversion is prepared; and of the bases from which pirate vessels set out for our coasts.

In addition, one of the necessary guarantees Cuba demands is that effective measures of oversight be established to prevent repetition of such acts in the future.

If the United States and its accomplices in aggression against Cuba do not agree to such inspection in their territories by the United Nations, then Cuba will under no circumstances agree to inspection of its own territory.

Only through reciprocal concessions and guarantees will it be possible to reach a broad and honorable agreement acceptable to all. If such an agreement is reached, Cuba will have no need for strategic weapons for its defense. The foreign military technicians on hand to instruct our armed forces would be reduced to the minimum, and the necessary conditions would be created for the normal development of our relations with the countries of this hemisphere.

A just and satisfactory solution to this crisis will without doubt help solve the other pending problems throughout the world. It would be a solid step forward along the genuine road of peace. And the world needs peace.

It is a legitimate aspiration of humanity that the enormous sums now being invested in the manufacture of costly and deadly armaments should be devoted to creating goods of use to man, especially for the benefit of the underdeveloped peoples whom the colonizing and imperialist countries have left mired in the greatest poverty. The war industry and arms trafficking can be of interest only to the monopolists whose business it is to stifle the most legitimate aspirations of the people and to profit, like birds of prey, from destruction and death.

President John F. Kennedy meets with U.S. army officials during Cuban 'missile' crisis

As Marxist-Leninists, we defend peace by conviction and on principle. Weapons are to us a heavy burden imposed by the imperialists, which divert energy and resources from the creative tasks of the revolution. Our position is to obtain peace as the supreme aspiration of humanity.

We believe in the possibility of averting war, and we do not believe that war is a fatal and inexorable fait accompli. But this does not mean that the imperialists have a right to be pirates or aggressors, or to commit acts of genocide against any people.

The imperialists must not confuse a principled position with weakness in face of their acts of aggression. It must be made quite clear to them that today they are in no position to impose their law on the world, and they will not be permitted to do so.

Cuba stresses once again that there is no better solution than the road of peace and discussion between governments, but at the same time we repeat that we shall never give in to the imperialists. To their positions of force, we shall respond with our firmness. To their attempt to humiliate us, we shall respond with our dignity. To their aggression, we shall respond with our determination to fight to the last combatant.

We do not believe in mere promises of nonaggression; we need deeds. Those deeds are set forth in our five points. We have as little faith in President Kennedy's words as we have fear of his veiled threats.

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

Osvaldo Dorticós
President of the Republic

Fidel Castro
Prime Minister and General Secretary of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations

1990–91 Gulf war: opening guns of WWIII

Continued from page 10
provided arms and financial aid to national liberation movements and to governments that came in conflict with imperialism in the Third World.

But none of these political assumptions hold any longer in the world situation today—one whose advent was most explosively marked by the 1987 crash of the world's stock markets. The crash was further evidence that the 1974-75 worldwide recession and the sharp and sudden slump of 1981-82 were not simply two more periodic downturns in the capitalist business cycle; they also signaled the end of an ascending segment in the broader curve of capitalist development and the ushering in of a descending segment heading toward intensified class battles on a national and international scale, including among the imperialist powers.

The world pattern today is characterized by capitalism's tendency toward economic stagnation, instability, and vulnerability to breakdowns that can precipitate a global depression and social crisis. It is a world of intensifying interimperialist competition and conflicts.

It is a world in which resistance and class conflicts will mount in response to the capitalists' intensifying assault on the rights and conditions of workers and exploited farmers. It is a world in which the disintegration of Stalinist parties and regimes across Eastern Europe will continue, and the crisis faced by the privileged caste in the Soviet Union will deepen, opening up space for the first time in decades for hundreds of millions of workers and farmers in those parts of the world to begin engaging in political life, to recognize and connect with fellow toilers abroad.

Capitalism will not be able to open a new period of accelerated economic development and improving social conditions to the peoples of the Third World under bourgeois regimes, including the Gulf region or elsewhere in the Middle East. Instead, international debt slavery weighs ever more heavily on all these peoples. Struggles for national liberation will increasingly be combined with battles against local exploiters for land, democratic and labor rights, and social justice. These national-democratic and anti-imperialist struggles, in order to be carried through to victory, will more than ever require revolutionary working-class leadership and political perspectives.

Conflicts between capitalist governments in the Third World will also increase. In the face of these volatile conditions, the imperialists will be driven time and again to use their military might to defend their power and their profits.

Washington's assault against Iraq is the first of a number of such wars that imperialism will continue fighting against peoples and governments in the Third World. They will be more and more intertwined with intensifying conflicts among the rival imperialist powers themselves. The gap will widen between Washington's military power and its relatively declining economic prowess, while its major imperialist rivals will seek to narrow the gap between their own economic strength and their relatively subordinate military power.

The mounting instability throughout Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union, as well as in China will not be reversed by reactionary, national-socialist efforts to win economic concessions from imperialism in return for foreign policy favors. The petty-bourgeois misleaders can only ape the world bourgeoisie, not become them, even if they share their values and beliefs. Workers and farmers in these countries will keep pressing their way into politics—domestic and international. So long as major means of production, banking, and trade remain expropriated, these states will continue to come into conflict with the imperialist ruling classes, which will be driven by their profit needs toward taking back hunks of the world and the world's toilers for direct capitalist exploitation. The dangers of imperialist wars against the republics of the Soviet Union and other workers states will grow, not recede.

Threats and probes against the Cuban and North Korean workers states—where working people refuse to back down in face of imperialist threats—will continue, and relations between these governments and the U.S. rulers will be exacerbated.

[1]The 1956 Hungarian revolution began in late October following attacks by Hungarian secret police and Soviet troops on demonstrations demanding democratic rights. Workers formed revolutionary councils, took control of a large section of the country, and battled several divisions of Soviet troops. The uprising was crushed by Moscow within several weeks, though strikes continued into mid-December. Also in 1956, a workers' rebellion in Poland was put down by a combination of armed repression and the establishment of a "reform" regime under Wladyslaw Gomulka. Three years earlier, in June 1953, Soviet troops and armored vehicles crushed an uprising in East Germany that included a general strike by more than 200,000 workers.

By the time of these rebellions in the 1950s, the Stalinist regimes and parties, through a combination of murderous repression and political disorientation, had decimated any vestige of communist leadership of the working class in these countries. These revolts, however, were the last in Eastern Europe to involve layers of socialist-minded workers who in their youth had been won to communist perspectives prior to the consolidation of the Stalinist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Communist International in the early 1930s.

The Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia was a period of mass radicalization during the early part of 1968 that initially succeeded in winning some democratic concessions and political space from the Stalinist regime. It was crushed by the August intervention of more than 650,000 Soviet and Eastern European troops. No communist leadership existed during this rebellion to organize resistance by working people and students, or to forge a nucleus of a revolutionary internationalist vanguard of the working class in the aftermath of the defeat.

— LETTERS —

Fighting from within

I am writing as a conscious person found within the physical confines of this unjust system of oppression and exploitation. I do not support this capitalist war on behalf of the multinational corporations who are using the workers as puppets in their imperialist plans. My heart is with all the pro-active people in the world fighting for global justice, and I am also fighting from within.

My main purpose for writing is because of the rally scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 19, 2002. This is a rally called by the Coalition for Parole Restoration on behalf of all the prisoners who are being denied parole release because of politics and economics. We are being denied release even after completing our mandatory minimums and after the completion of all the therapeutic/vocational/educational programs.

This rally is going to be attended by hundreds of our family and friends. The mainstream media doesn't give us coverage because they belong to the corporations that support the same system we are fighting against. Please voice our plight in the *Militant*.

This rally can also be a perfect place to get votes for Mr. Martin Koppel in his run for governor of New York. If I were home he would have my vote for sure.

I don't know what I would do if I didn't have the *Militant* bringing me light.

A prisoner
Otisville, New York

Tool to fight imperialism

I would like very much to renew my subsidized six-month subscription to the *Militant* weekly newspaper for an additional six months. Please find the enclosed check for $6. I wish to convey my compliments to the *Militant* editorial staff for honest, insightful and most pertinent news made available to all those in struggle against imperialism the world over.

A prisoner
Auburn, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

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Rail car deaths of 11 workers are on the hands of U.S. rulers

BY LISA ROTTACH

DENISON, Iowa—Socialist Workers candidates Edwin Fruit and I traveled to Denison, Iowa, in October to talk to working people about our campaigns, and to solicit facts and opinions about the deaths of 11 immigrant workers whose bodies had been discovered here a few days previously. Fruit is the party's candidate for Congress in Iowa's third district, and I am running for governor of Nebraska.

Denison is a small town in western Iowa, surrounded by farms, landscaped by grain elevators, and bordered by railway tracks. An Iowa Beef Processing (IBP) plant and a Farmland Foods meatpacking facility employ many hundreds of immigrant workers who are changing the face of the working class in the area.

On October 14 a worker at an Archer Daniels Midland grain elevator southwest of the town had found the 11 bodies inside a hopper rail car. The car had left Matamoros, near Mexico's border with the United States, in June.

According to the Iowa State medical examiner, intense heat and dehydration had killed the seven men and four women, who had set out for the United States from Mexico and Honduras. As temperatures soared as high as 140 degrees, outside locks prevented escape.

According to government statistics, more than 650 working people have died in the last two years as they have attempted such border crossings. Most of the deaths are attributed to heat exposure. "Many Hispanics here have relatives or friends who either died or had close shaves" with death, Reverend Bo Brink of Lutheran Hispanic Outreach told the *Denison Review*.

We issued a campaign statement laying the blame for the deaths squarely at the door of the U.S. government and its brutal immigration policy, condemned the "attacks on immigrants at the border, in the workplace, and elsewhere," and demanded that the U.S. government stop its workplace raids and deportations (see excerpts of the statement on this page).

As part of our fact-finding visit, we organized a campaign stop at the Farmland Foods plant gate, and found a variety of opinions among the workers who stopped to talk on their way out from work. One meatcutter with seven months seniority said that he "hadn't expected to see this kind of massacre up here. I come from the Southwest where this is more common. These are people trying to come just to feed their families.

"Imperialism is everywhere," added the young worker. "We are considered trash by the rich. We don't have equal rights. If we save up enough of the crumbs they toss us, maybe we can put together one piece of bread. I can't save enough, can't make enough. I'm worried about tomorrow." He bought a subscription to the *Militant* and the issue of *New International* featuring the article, "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq."

We also talked to farmers and others unloading animals and hay at a cow-holding barn near the plant. A sewing machine operator from Carroll, Iowa, purchased a *Militant* subscription in between helping her farmer friend dump his hay.

"Are you saying it's the U.S. government that is criminal and discriminates?" asked one man who had been recently fired from Farmland. "I'll be right back." He promptly returned and signed up for a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*. He had been a farmer in his native El Salvador.

Earlier that day we had visited the site where the bodies had been found and were interviewed by Univision, a national Spanish-language television network. I told the reporters that the labor movement and its allies must join together and condemn the attacks on immigrants.

Politicians and media commentators have pointed to "coyotes," the smalltime immigrant smugglers who organize border crossings for fees of a few thousand dollars, as the culprits in the 11 deaths. This, said Fruit, "is an attempt by the ruling class to deflect blame from the root cause of these deaths."

Lisa Rottach is a kill floor worker at the Swift and Co. plant in Omaha, Nebraska, and the Socialist Workers candidate for governor.

Marchers protest immigration 'security' sweep against workers at Houston airport

Militant/Phil Duzinski

Some 500 workers and others marched October 20 through southwest Houston under the slogan "Dignity and Respect: No Human Being Is Illegal." The march, called by the Central American Resource Center (CRECEN), protested a September police "antiterrorist" sweep against undocumented workers at Bush International Airport. Federal cops indicted 143 workers and arrested 64 other airport employees with varying levels of security clearance.

Socialists in Midwest: Stop INS terror raids and deportations

The following excerpts are from a statement released October 19 by Lisa Rottach, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Nebraska, and Edwin Fruit, the candidate for U.S. Congress in Iowa's third congressional district.

Hundreds of immigrant workers die every year trying to cross the border from Mexico. In countries plundered by imperialism millions of workers and peasants continue to be driven off the land and into the cities, often to the United States, in search of a livelihood.

The U.S. employers and their government want to maintain a permanent category of millions of workers with few rights who can be superexploited. That is the role of the immigration cops, the hated *la migra*. As the rulers march toward war, the rights of all workers are being attacked, but none more than those of immigrant workers.

Despite the efforts by the U.S. employer class to portray workers born abroad as "illegals," criminals, or helpless victims, immigrant workers are becoming more confident in speaking up, organizing, and defending their dignity and rights. Through such actions these fellow workers strengthen our class. The labor movement and its allies must condemn the attacks on immigrants. We must demand:

No to Washington's imperialist war drive!

Open the borders ! Stop INS raids and deportations! End Social Security 'no match' letters and driver's license denials!

Defend workers' rights! No secret detentions or trials!

Cancel the Third World Debt!

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 11, 1977

Some 1,500 people took part in a historic, united show of opposition to President Carter's attacks on undocumented immigrants at the National Chicano/Latino Conference held here October 28-30.

Those present included leaders of diverse organizations—the broadest array of Chicanos and Latinos united around a single issue since the height of the anti-Vietnam War movement.

The widely publicized conference showed the Chicano movement speaks with one voice in saying "No" to the Carter plan to step up deportations. The gathering was a political blow to the Carter administration, and especially to Leonel Castillo, who has pretended to represent Latino interests as head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the hated *la migra*.

The conference called for nationally coordinated protests November 18–20 in support of immediate, unconditional amnesty for all undocumented workers.

According to conference organizers, people from more than thirty states attended. Especially significant was the delegation from Mexico, which included representatives of the Democratic Tendency of the Electrical Workers Union and the National Front for People's Action (FNAP), two of the most prominent oppositionist organizations in Mexico.

Support for the conference grew after Carter submitted a message to Congress outlining his proposed crackdown on undocumented immigrants.

THE MILITANT

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November 10, 1952

An event of great significance for labor in the United States has occurred in Bolivia, a small land-locked South American country whose population is mainly Indian. On Oct. 31, amid ceremonies in the mining center of Catavi, the new Bolivian government under President Victor Paz Estenessoro formally seized and nationalized the big foreign-owned tin mining corporations, Patino, Hochschild and Aramyo.

Thus, a powerful blow has been struck at U.S. imperialism within the Western Hemisphere, which Wall Street has always considered its very special private preserve. This is the first time that such nationalization has taken place in this hemisphere as the result of revolutionary action by the workers. The previous Bolivian military government dominated by the tin interests was overthrown by the direct mass action of the working people.

It is conservatively reported that one-third of the shares of the three seized companies are in the hands of American investors. The bulk of the Patino stocks are owned by U.S. interests and the company is registered in this country. British and Swiss interests are sizable in the other companies.

For decades U.S. capitalists have profited from the toil of the terribly exploited Bolivian workers.

Garment workers win back pay in San Francisco

BY BERNIE SENTER

SAN FRANCISCO—Some 150 garment workers attended a celebration of a victory here in Chinatown October 20. After fighting for more than a year, 240 workers at the Wins garment factories received months of back pay they were owed.

The California Labor Commission agreed to pay the workers nearly $1 million. The festivities were hosted by the Chinese Progressive Association who helped organize the workers fight.

"Yes, I feel we have justice because workers fought for this," said Li Qin Zhou, a worker at Wins.

Workers organized repeated protests in front of the factories, before the state Labor Commission, and when Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao was scheduled to be in town.

The garment workers received no pay from April through August 2001. Anna Wong, owner of three Wins factories, told Labor Department investigators she used the "slow pay" system, delaying payments to the workers for weeks supposedly in order to improve the company cash flow. Workers were given pay stubs without checks attached. When workers protested, bosses told them they would receive nothing if they spoke out.

"I never thought people would come together like this," said Li. "At the beginning only five or six people tried to do something. Others told us we would get nowhere. Then more and more people did something." Li received a check for $4,680 in back pay.

"We have to continue fighting and getting together," Li commented. "I know a lot of people who face unfair situations." She explained that other garment workers have approached her about problems they face at the factories where they work. "I tell them they have to get together and fight. You have to fight."

The celebration was addressed by representatives of the Chinese Progressive Association, the group Sweatshop Watch, and the Labor Commission, as well as Rollande Girard, a garment worker, representing the Socialist Workers campaign.

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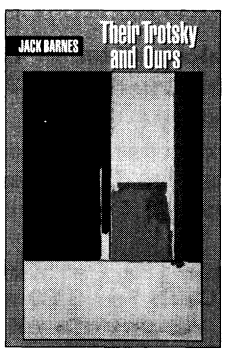

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Behind the myth of women as a 'second sex'

Printed below is an excerpt from *Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. In this pamphlet Reed rebuts biological and anthropological theories that 'prove' that genes determine the social roles of men and women.

Capitalist spokespeople in politics, the arts, and sciences resort to a wide range of reactionary arguments to justify the employers' assaults on working people, including attacks on women's right to abortion and on affirmative action, as a means to divide and weaken the working class. Pseudoscientific anti-woman propaganda is used by the bosses and their servants in the Democratic and Republican parties to try to force women to accept second-class status on the job and in all of society. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

❖

BY EVELYN REED

This brings us to the final point in the tangle of myths aiming to prove that women have always been the second sex. This one concerns the distinction between the primitive and civilized division of labor between the sexes. According to the prevailing propaganda, the division of labor between the sexes has always been the same, with woman's work confined to home and family. From the very beginning of human history to the present day the division of labor between the sexes is believed to have been a division between the husband and wife of a family. The husband goes out to work while the wife stays at home to take care of the household and children. Some women in the liberation movement are indignant because the husband gets paid for his work while the wife does not. But the injustice goes deeper than this. It involves the stunted, dependent, culturally sterile life of a woman caged up in a domestic enclosure doing stupefying chores.

Women are deprived of the kind of socialized work which would give them economic independence; such work is largely reserved for men. Marriage and the family are upheld as the finest career a true woman can pursue. Reactionary contraception and abortion laws force women to bear children whether they want to or not, and in the absence of child-care centers each individual woman is saddled with the burden of raising the children herself.

Militant/Carole Lesnick

April 2001 March for Women's Lives in Washington in support of abortion rights. The bosses promote the reactionary argument that women's biological make-up is responsible for their second-class status in capitalist society.

Dispossession from social, cultural work

Historians often point out that with the advent of the new economy founded upon agriculture and stock raising, many new divisions of labor came into existence, replacing the former sexual division of labor. To give a few examples, pastoral activities became separated from farming; metallurgy, house construction, shipbuilding, textiles, pottery, and other crafts became specialized trades. Along with these divisions of labor in the crafts, there grew up specializations in the cultural sphere, from priests and bards to scientists and artists.

The roles of the sexes were radically transformed in the process. As these new divisions and subdivisions of labor grew and proliferated they became more and more - and finally exclusively - in the hands of the men. The women were squeezed out of these fields of social and cultural work - and pushed into home and family life. With the rise of state and church power, women were taught that their whole lives were bounded by the four walls of a home and the best women were those who served their husbands and families without complaint. In this elevation of men and downgrading of women, they were compelled to forfeit not only their former place in social production but also their former system of communal child care.

To be sure, women of the plebeian classes, the "common people," have always worked. In the long agricultural period they worked on farms as well as in cottage crafts, and they did all this along with bearing children and taking care of households. But working in and through and for an individual husband, home, and family, is by no means the same thing as engaging in socialized labor in a communal society. Participation in social production develops the mind and body; isolation and preoccupation with home chores weakens them and narrows the outlook.

In other words, the division of labor between the sexes has not always been the same. The male-dominated division of labor that came in with class society, private property, and the patriarchal family represented a colossal robbery of the women. This is even more true today with the reduction of the extended, productive farm family to the tiny, nuclear, consuming family of the urban era.

To refute the myths that have helped to keep women oppressed-from the "uterus theory" to the "eternal family" propaganda - is not simply a matter for scientific and historical correction. It has profound implications for the women's liberation movement. The argument that woman's biological makeup is responsible for her social inferiority is the chief stock-in-trade for the male supremacists. If this claim proves to be unfounded their position collapses.

Females in nature suffer no disabilities compared to males as a result of their biology. Nor were women downgraded as a result of their maternal role in preclass society. They were held in the highest esteem for their combined functions as producer-procreatrix. Woman's position in society, therefore, has been shaped and reshaped by changing historical conditions. The drastic transformation that overturned matriarchal communism brought about the downfall of the female sex. It was with the rise of patriarchal class society that the biological makeup of women became the ideological pretext for justifying and continuing the dispossession of women from social and cultural life and keeping them in a servile status.

Only by recognizing this can women come to grips with the real causes of our subjugation and degradation which are today bound up with the structure of the capitalist system. Our struggle for liberation will be hindered so long as we are hoodwinked into believing that nature rather than this society is the source of our oppression.

November BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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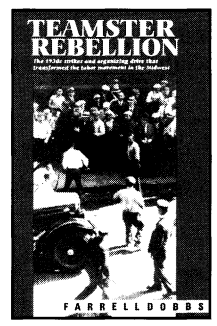

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Hear Cuban revolutionary leader

The Cuba-Africa tour by Víctor Dreke and Ana Morales offers a rare opportunity to learn about the Cuban Revolution and its internationalist role in Africa's freedom struggles. Several hundred students have already heard Dreke and Morales speak in Washington, D.C., their first stop, including 300 who participated in a meeting at Howard University. The speaking series continues through Valdosta and Atlanta, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; Tampa, Florida; and Boston.

Víctor Dreke has been a leading cadre in Cuba's revolutionary movement for half a century. Dreke became politically active in central Cuba in 1952 as a 15-year-old, when he and other youth took to the streets to protest the U.S.-backed coup of Fulgencio Batista. By the end of 1957 he had been forced underground by the dictatorship's repression and joined the guerrilla front of the Revolutionary Directorate. After the triumph of the revolution he was one of the commanders of the operations in the Escambray mountains of central Cuba that crushed U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary bands who were sowing terror among working people there.

In 1965 Dreke served as second in command under Ernesto Che Guevara of the Cuban internationalist combatants in the Congo. The volunteers went to that country at the request of leaders of the national liberation movement there who were followers of Patrice Lumumba, the assassinated leader of the Congo's fight for independence. They blazed a trail for hundreds of thousands of Cuban internationalist volunteers who later joined liberation forces in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and elsewhere over the following years and decades.

Dreke returned to Africa in 1966–68 to head Cuba's military mission in Guinea-Bissau—at that time fighting for its independence from Portugal—and the Republic of Guinea. Dreke's talks on "Cuba and Africa: 1959 to today" draw on his life experience as a leader of Cuba's internationalist missions.

Dreke's example shows the caliber of revolutionary leadership that was forged through the struggle that ushered in a workers and farmers government in Cuba. That leadership waged an enormous battle to transform the social relations on which capitalism is built, including centuries of racism, reached out to other peoples fighting to break free of the chains of colonial and imperialist domination, and through four decades has successfully stood up to U.S. imperialist aggression.

Today Dreke joins with other revolutionary leaders and cadres in Cuba who are seeking to draw the new generations of Cubans into revolutionary activity and win them to a communist perspective. His book, *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, tells the story of the kind of men and women who made the Cuban Revolution and how that revolution transformed them.

The potential interest in Dreke's powerful message can be seen in an interview with him that appeared in the October 30 *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, which highlighted his description of Che Guevara's revolutionary leadership. "Some people have tried to mystify Che, but for us, he was flesh and bones," Dreke is quoted as saying in the interview.

Also speaking is Ana Morales, a doctor and professor at the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana who headed the Cuban medical mission in Guinea Bissau in 1985. She helped found the first medical school in that country, donated by Cuba. Speaking on "Cuba's medical missions in Africa," she gives a vivid description of Cuba's internationalism today.

Students, young workers, and others who want to know the truth about the Cuban Revolution and its internationalist example in Africa will not want to miss taking part in—and helping publicize and bring others to—these meetings.

The speakers offer more than simply pointing to moral integrity and the example of the Cuban Revolution. Their experiences point to the need for—and capacity of—working people here to build a movement capable of following that example.

'Cuba, Africa bound by solidarity'

Continued from Page 2

to take in the fight against the spread of AIDS. The percentage of the population in Cuba today that is HIV-positive, she reported, is less than 0.001 percent.

By comparison, 0.3 percent of the U.S. population is HIV-positive. In South Africa, one in nine people is living with HIV.

Morales also spoke about the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana, where she teaches. This facility offers full scholarships to young people from countries throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa who want to attend medical school and meet the qualifications. The only thing Cuba asks of them is that they agree to return to their countries and neighborhoods to practice medicine. The Cuban government has offered 500 full scholarships to students from the United States. Olivia Burlingame of Pastors for Peace, a group that opposes the U.S. embargo against Cuba, staffed a literature table outside the meeting with information on how young people in the United States can apply to study there and with information on the defense of the Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the United States.

Following the meeting at Howard, numerous students lined up to speak to Dreke and Morales and to have Víctor Dreke autograph their new copies of his book.

Fidel Castro and Che Guevara

Earlier in the week Dreke and Morales spent a day speaking with several groups in Baltimore. The day began with speaking to a class of 30 students at the College of Notre Dame. The hour and a half long class was followed by informal discussion in a nearby lounge for another hour. They also held a noontime discussion with the sociology department faculty and graduate students at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC).

That evening the Cuban revolutionaries spoke at a meeting at UMBC sponsored by the Multi-Cultural Affairs Center, Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics, Africana Studies Department, and African Students Association. About 70 people attended, including a number of African students.

At that meeting, a student asked Dreke if Fidel Castro was involved with or knew beforehand about the death of the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary leader Che Guevara. Guevara, who headed a revolutionary column of fighters in Bolivia, was killed in 1967 by the Bolivian Army in close consultation with the CIA.

"Many things along these lines have been written by enemies of the Cuban Revolution to try to present divisions in the leadership," replied Dreke. "This is a slander of Fidel, especially. Fidel and Che were more than brothers, they were revolutionary comrades."

Dreke pointed out that when Guevara joined the Cuban revolutionary movement in the late 1950s, he asked that, when the time came after the victory of the Cuban Revolution, he be allowed to return to Argentina to be part of making a revolution in his native country. In 1966, when Che left for Bolivia, Castro had sought to convince him not to go with the first group of combatants to Bolivia, Dreke said, to make sure the conditions were right before he joined the mission.

"It was not Fidel but the Bolivian Communist Party, with Monje at its head, who betrayed Che," Dreke explained. "With the exception of a small group of communists who joined Che, they stabbed him in the back." Dreke was referring to Mario Monje, leader of the Bolivian Communist Party, who verbally welcomed Guevara's combat unit to Bolivia but, after it arrived, refused to support it.

"Fidel did everything he could for the fighters in Bolivia," Dreke continued, "as he did for us in the Congo, and as he has done for Cuban internationalist fighters everywhere."

Dreke and Morales spoke at American University October 24. Phillip Brenner, chair of the Interdisciplinary Council on the Americas, moderated the meeting, attended by close to 100 people. Brenner was a participant in the recent conference hosted in Cuba on the 40th anniversary of the "missile" crisis, with delegations in attendance from Russia, the United States, and Cuba. The Cuban visitors also spoke in two classes at American University the previous day.

In between campus meetings, Dreke and Morales visited classrooms at Banneker High School, where they were invited back by a couple of teachers following their first speaking engagement at the school. They also spoke to the Writer's Roundtable hosted by TransAfrica Forum, where they contributed a copy of Dreke's book to the Arthur Ashe Research Library. TransAfrica Forum played a leading role in opposing U.S. investments in apartheid South Africa. Hosted by TransAfrica's president Bill Fletcher, the meeting was also attended by Josh Williams, president of the Washington-Metro AFL-CIO.

The two Cubans also met with six railworkers at a pizzeria in Union Station here. There Dreke was asked about trade unions in Cuba. He explained that he had been part of union struggles prior to the Cuban Revolution so he could talk about the unions before and after the revolution.

Before the revolution, Dreke explained, there were some militant union struggles but they were often isolated from each other, and workers had to fight the government. Since the triumph of the revolution, workers and their unions are part of governing Cuba, and workers take up a wide range of social and economic questions through them.

Dreke and Morales left for Georgia on October 26. There they will visit with farmers in Valdosta, Georgia, and will speak at Clark/Atlanta University, Spelman College, and a citywide meeting in Atlanta. Then they head to Birmingham, Alabama, where they will speak at Miles College in Fairfield, the University of Alabama Tuscaloosa, and Birmingham Southern College, as well as at a citywide meeting at the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

The six-week tour also includes visits to Boston and Tampa, Florida (see schedule on page 2)

Demonstrators in Washington criticize U.S. policy on Iraq

BY ARRIN HAWKINS AND BETSY FARLEY

WASHINGTON—A march and rally organized under the slogan of "Stop the War on Iraq Before it Starts" drew tens of thousands of people here October 26. Protests organized under similar slogans were held in San Francisco and a number of other cities in the United States and other countries.

The Washington event was called by International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop the War and End Racism), a coalition of radical, pacifist, and liberal organizations. It was endorsed by several well-known religious and Democratic Party figures and a range of social protest organizations.

Among the most prominent speakers were Democratic politicians Jesse Jackson, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, and Alfred Sharpton. Actress Susan Sarandon and writer Alice Walker were among the other speakers.

Jackson, one of the main speakers, criticized the Bush administration's policies toward Iraq. He spoke in favor of the U.S. intervention against Iraq under the the auspices of the United Nations. This is "a time for the UN, not unilateralism...a time for allied pressure, not preemptive strikes," he said.

Backing the overthrow of Iraq's government, he said "Saddam Hussein should be held accountable for his crimes" before the International Criminal Court.

Jackson urged participants to "come alive November five" and vote for Democratic candidates in the elections. This theme was echoed in placards carried by a number of participants, such as "Regime change begins at home" and "Dump Bush, not bombs."

Several speakers attributed Washington's war drive to President George Bush and said the White House is using the drive toward war on Iraq as a distraction from "American" problems. This theme was prevalent among the forces building the action. "Bush's drive for war serves as a cover and a distraction for the sinking economy," said Leslie Feinberg in *Workers World*, newspaper of Workers World Party, one of the initiators of the demonstration. "Stop Bush's war machine" was a headline of the newspaper of the International Socialist Organization."

Patriotic themes

A number of speakers struck patriotic themes, which were also reflected among many of the demonstrators, some of whom carried American flags and flag symbols.

Demonstrators came from New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other East Coast and Midwest cities. Many were attending a protest demonstration for the first time, including contingents of students from many different campuses. Some of the groups were from Palestinian and Muslim student organizations, who condemned the Israeli regime's war on the Palestinian people.

Some protesters interviewed by the *Militant* took issue with arguments made by speakers at the rally. Jaime Kruse, who came by bus from New York, said she disagreed with Jackson's statement that the 1990–91 Gulf War was justified but that this one was not.

Organizers of the protests called on participants to sign forms stating, "I Vote No to War." The forms are to be delivered to Washington in conjunction with another demonstration planned for January 18–19.

Candidates and supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign from Washington, North Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Georgia set up a number of campaign tables. They distributed campaign literature, sold the *Militant* and Pathfinder books, and met demonstrators who were interested in a communist perspective.

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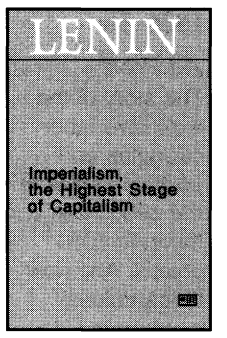

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THE MILITANT

Australia rulers use bombings in Bali to deepen intervention in Indonesia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—In the wake of the October 12 bombings on the Indonesian island of Bali, the Australian rulers have stepped up their probes into Indonesia, as well as their attacks on the rights of working people at home, under the guise of defending "national security" and guarding against "terrorist" attacks. At the same time they continue moves to join the U.S.-led imperialist invasion of Iraq now in preparation.

Among the 190 people killed in the twin bomb blasts on the island, almost half were citizens of Australia—a fact that politicians of both governing and opposition parties have tried to capitalize on. "Terrorism is a worldwide menace, and that's been brought home to us," said John Howard, the prime minister of the conservative Liberal-National Party government. "The war against terrorism must go on with unrelenting vigor and with an unconditional commitment."

Australia's ambassador to the United Nations, John Dauth, referred to the Bali attacks in an October 17 debate on Iraq in the United Nations Security Council. Australia must "step up to the mark to address the threat posed to the world by Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction," he said.

Two days after the bombing, Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer and Justice Minister Christopher Ellison flew to Bali and to Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia—a country of more than 200 million people. In meetings there they put pressure on the Indonesian authorities to arrest suspected leaders of alleged terrorist groups, particularly Jemaah Islamiah (JI), a radical Islamic organization. Downer called on the United Nations to blacklist the group.

Protest by Shangri-la hotel workers in Jakarta, November 2001. Under the guise of fighting terrorism, Australian rulers are deepening their assaults on working people.

"We have a right, and I have a duty to push upon and press upon the Indonesian government the need for a cooperative effort in the region," said Downer. The head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and the Australian Federal Police commissioner accompanied the two politicians. They reportedly offered to send reinforcements for the eight ASIO officers and 44 federal police already dispatched to Indonesia.

Imperialist cops intervene

Following meetings October 16 with Indonesian leaders, including President Megawati Sukarnoputri, Downer announced that an Australian official would co-chair a newly established police and intelligence task force that incorporates cops from France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States, as well as Indonesia and Australia. Four "terrorism specialists" have been sent by the British government. As of October 20 there were some 81 Australian police involved.

Australian defense minister Robert Hill proposed October 22 that Australian forces be sent to Indonesia to help "root out terrorist organizations."

A spokesman for Indonesia's Foreign Affairs Department, Marty Natalegawa, however, said that Indonesia "would not accept the presence of foreign military on our soil."

Hill also suggested that the Australian military resume training officers for Kopassus, the special forces unit that earned the hatred of working people in Indonesia under the Suharto dictatorship. The training was suspended just before the Australia-led 1999 imperialist intervention in East Timor. Kopassus is "Indonesia's most effective response to terrorism," said Hill.

On October 19 Indonesia's cabinet enacted anti-terrorism regulations giving police broad new powers to detain terrorism suspects without charges. The following day Indonesian police arrested Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Bashir—JI's alleged "spiritual leader"—on accusations of terrorist activities. Without presenting evidence, the Australian government has said it believes JI is probably responsible for the Bali bombings.

'Homeland security' department

Robert Carr, the Labor Party state premier of New South Wales, has called for a new federal "Department of Homeland Security." The new department would combine the armed forces, federal and state police, intelligence agencies, and emergency services under a single command structure.

"After September 11 and now Bali, it cannot be business as usual," Carr said. "We also need to lift our expertise to deal with the threat of car bombs, and that means drawing on the experience of Northern Ireland and the FBI."

Carr is also reportedly considering proposals to give NSW police special powers to stop and search vehicles, drivers, and pedestrians in designated areas, and for the state's crime commission to extend its broad powers to the police in "terrorism" probes. These include the power to compel people to answer questions and to release documents. The commission can also obtain warrants to tap phones and conduct other surveillance activities.

Howard met with state and territory leaders on October 24 to push through a new intergovernmental "counter-terrorism" agreement. His government is introducing new legislation to allow prosecutions for murder of Australian citizens overseas, retrospectively from October 1. At the same time the federal government announced it will spend an extra A$59 million over five years to tighten security at Australian embassies, and combat alleged document fraud at border control points (A$1 = US 56 cents).

Capitalist politicians here have sought to use the toll of the Bali bombing to whip up support for this course toward war and deepening attacks on workers' rights. The limitations of this approach, however, could be seen during a "national day of mourning" on October 20. A *Sydney Morning Herald* columnist noted that in ceremonies across Australia, "Jingoism was nowhere to be seen. Flags were few."

The more powerful of the two bombs blew up the Sari club. Until a recent court case, explained an Australian resident of Bali to the *New York Times*, "the club had posted a sign saying that only 'foreign nationals' would be admitted. Later, the admission standard was changed to 'invitation only,' code for a policy that tried to exclude Balinese."

Linda Harris is a member of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union.

Longshore workers defend job safety

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

LOS ANGELES—"They gave us more than 900 jobs on the first day when we normally handle about 450," said Vance Lelli, a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Workers Union Local 23 in Tacoma, Washington. "They double our work and they complain about our productivity."

At the Matson terminal in Oakland, California, dockworker Clarence Wagoner, also an ILWU member, said, "We're all safety minded—we're not going to kill each other because they say our productivity is low." He explained, "We're not doubling out," referring to working two eight-hour shifts in a row.

These and other West Coast dockworkers were responding to the shipping and stevedoring bosses' charges of a union-organized job action. The employers' Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) has accused the ILWU of engaging in a "concerted, systematic work slowdown" and has asked the U.S. Department of Justice to intervene against the union, claiming it is violating the Taft-Hartley law.

Ten days into a lockout organized by the shipping bosses, the federal government intervened in the fight by 10,500 dockworkers for a contract on October 8 by invoking the antilabor Taft-Hartley law, under which an 80-day "cooling-off" period was imposed. Under the law, the terms of the previous contract are reinstated and the unionists are required to work "at a normal and reasonable rate of speed."

Longshore workers are "really mad about government intervention," said Mark Downs, an ILWU member in Seattle. "We are especially concerned about safety. There were many collisions on the docks even before the lockout." Safety is a major issue in the unionists' contract fight. In the name of "modernization," shipping bosses have been speeding up production.

Ben, a 30-year veteran from the Ben Nutter terminal in Oakland who gave only his first name, said, "When I first learned driving the crane, we handled 22 or 23 containers an hour. Now they want us to grab 30 an hour. That's one container every two minutes."

In their push against the dockworkers, the shipping bosses now are hoping the federal judge overseeing the dispute, U.S. District Judge William Alsup, will declare the ILWU guilty of waging a slowdown, in which case he could fine the union or charge its officials with contempt of court.

The PMA alleges that productivity per worker dropped by one-third in the first week after the docks reopened. The union rebutted the charges saying they were baseless.

"PMA mismanagement is causing the backlog," the ILWU said in a statement to union members.

In its campaign to force the government to intervene, the PMA, echoed by the big-business media, exaggerated the effects the lockout was having on the economy.

A recent study states that the widely circulated figure of $1 billion to $2 billion in daily costs are false. The author of the study, Patrick Anderson, from the Anderson Economic Group, says "[We] view a figure of $1 billion to $2 billion per day as closer to the economic impact of sinking the ships than delaying them." The figure actually came from a study done one year ago for the PMA. Few big-business dailies have reported the findings from the study.

The Anderson Group report noted that the effects on consumers and businesses were relatively mild; "nowhere near the exaggerated numbers reported in the newspapers. Factories by and large kept humming, retailers kept selling, workers kept working."

Besides using the Taft-Hartley law, government officials are weighing other moves that would undercut the ILWU. One is a proposal to bring the ILWU under the anti-labor Railway Labor Act, which would give the White House greater powers to stop a walkout. Another proposal, strongly opposed by ILWU members, is to adopt legislation breaking up the union into separate bargaining units, one each for the 29 ports. The West Coast dockworkers are currently organized in one bargaining unit.

"Splitting up the union's contract would offer ships alternate West Coast destinations should laborers at one or more ports strike. This would place union members in competition with each other, weakening the ILWU's greatest leveraging tool—its solidarity," the Los Angeles *Business Journal* reported.

A good example of this solidarity was the dockworkers' response to a one-day nurses' strike at Long Beach Medical Center (see article on page 3). Together with members of other unions, they walked the nurses' picket lines and spoke at two of their rallies on October 23.

The following day the Medical Center locked out the 1,300 registered nurses, who are members of the California Nurses Association.

"We know what being locked out is all about," said Dave Beamon, a leader of the ILWU here during a October 23 rally in front of the hospital. "We will support you to the end."

Bill Kalman in San Francisco contributed to this article.

from Pathfinder

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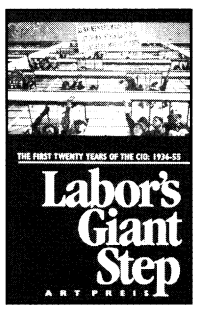

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